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# MUSCLECAR REVIEW

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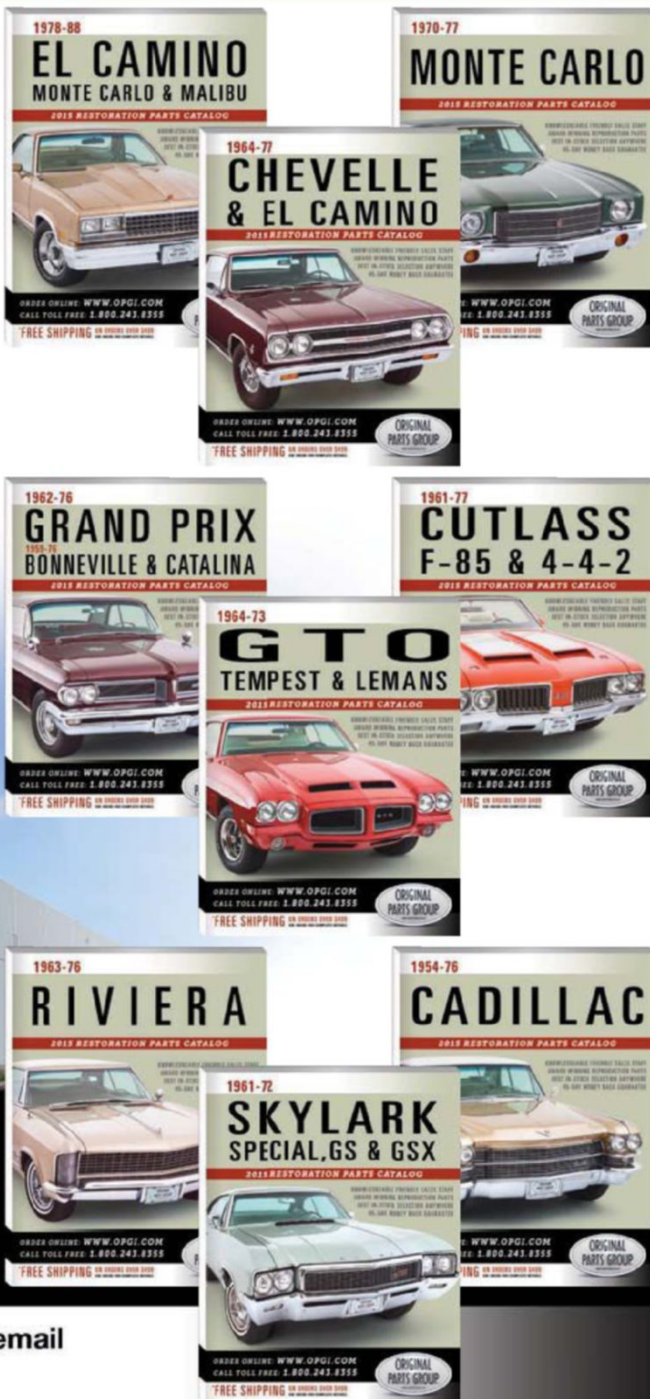
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**ON THE COVER:** The hunt for barn-find cars takes our correspondents far and wide, but so far Jerry Heasley's trip to Juarez, Mexico, has been the most way-out. The Chevelle SS hiding on this rooftop made the dangerous trip into drug cartel territory worthwhile. Heasley grabbed the cover photo plus the story on this long-lost Chevy, which begins on page 22.



## EDITOR'S NOTE

### The Father of the 426 Hemi

*This month we turned this space over to Arvid Svendsen to write about the passing of Tom Hoover. —Ed.*

**P**repare for a run-on sentence. Over the past month I visited Bucky Hess' race shop to see his newly painted Kandy Kuda SS/AH 1968 426 Hemi Barracuda, helped a friend locate a real 1964 Plymouth Savoy Race 426 Hemi aluminum car, spent time checking in on Jim Hale's 426 Hemi NHRA Stock Eliminator engine build, pined over a couple of 426 Hemi cars at Mecum Headquarters in Wisconsin, checked out a number of 426 Hemi cars on eBay and Craigslist, attempted to sell my wannabe-a-426-Hemi 1964 Plymouth 383-powered Sport Fury, made plans to pick up a California parts car for my maybe-I'll-get-a-426-Hemi 1966 Coronet 500, checked out a custom 1969 Charger with a 426 Hemi variant, and watched the 1979 movie *Hot Rod* (aka *Rebel of the Road*), which stars a 426-Hemi-powered 1941 Willys. Suffice it to say, the 426 Hemi engine is an ever-present element in my muscle car adventures.

### "His stellar career left an indelible mark on the muscle car hobby"

Tom Hoover, the father of the 426 Hemi, was transferred into the presence of his Maker on April 30, 2015. He was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. He was also an automotive legend. Hired by Chrysler in 1955, he worked on the Bendix Electrojector electronic fuel-injection system, helped develop the Hyper Pak Slant Six racing engine, and was one of the founding members of the legendary Ramchargers car club in the fall of 1958. The Ramchargers was made up largely of Chrysler engineers and employees who shared a passion for drag racing.

In Hoover's words, "I was a drag racer. I put a 392 in my 1957 Plymouth convertible and won C/Gas in that thing. That was one of the reasons I was given the job of engineer-



ing coordinator of the Chrysler Race Program."

The dragstrip success of the Ramchargers' 392-powered High and Mighty 1949 Plymouth got the corporation's attention, which then supplied the club with a 1961 Dodge Dart Seneca powered by a 413 Wedge motor. Driven by Jim Thornton, the Dart famously defeated Dyno Don Nicholson's 409 Chevy in a match race at the Indy U.S. Nationals in 1961. That race would be referred to as "the most important drag race in Chrysler history."

By 1962, Hoover and his team had developed the Maximum Performance Wedge program. The Max Wedge 413 engines quickly became a dominant presence in Super Stock racing.

I was privileged to interview Tom Hoover in February 2014. Our conversation revealed a genuine humility that pointed to the group effort of the Ramchargers as key to their success and impact on the burgeoning muscle car culture of the 1960s. His infectious enthusiasm for the accomplishments of Chrysler's Race Program made me glad to be a Mopar guy.

Hoover explained that even though Chrysler was known and feared on the dragstrip by 1963, it was not as competitive on the center-stage NASCAR tracks. The story goes that Chrysler CEO Lynn Townsend's sons made a reference to Chrysler cars being boring, leading to an early 1963 edict issued to Hoover to win the 1964 Daytona 500. Hoover said that discussions with Chrysler Chief Engineer Bill Weertman and the brilliant draftsman Frank Bilk would lead to the plan to adapt the Hemi cylinder head to the RB Wedge block.

Chrysler gave Hoover and crew the green light in April 1963, and the financial backing in May. A scant eight months later, Richard Petty won the 1964 Daytona 500, leading 184

of the race's 200 laps in his 426-Hemi-powered 1964 Plymouth. Hemi-powered cars of Jim Pardue, Paul Goldsmith, and Jim Paschal finished second, third, and fifth, respectively. I know of no greater racing and engineering accomplishment in NASCAR history.

Hoover went on to steer the development of the Chrysler Race Program cars, including the 1968 Hemi Darts and Barracudas. He also led the development of later high-performance street cars, including the 1969½ A12 cars, 1970 AAR 'Cudas, and even the Li'l Red Express trucks. From 1964 until the later 1970s, Hoover and Larry Shepherd put on Chrysler Drag Racing Seminars for grassroots racers. Hoover was front and center in the pioneer years of Pro Stock from 1970 to 1974, backing the cars of racing greats like Ronnie Sox, Herb McCandless, Don Carlton, Dick Landy, and Bill Bagshaw.

Regardless of your brand preference, you must admit that Hoover's stellar career left an indelible mark on the muscle car hobby. Even after retirement, Tom Hoover continued to be active in the muscle car hobby. A highlight for him was teaming up with his son, Tom Jr., to race a 1964 Max Wedge Plymouth in the popular Pure Stock racing series.

After Hoover's passing, I had a conversation with Tom Jr., who explained what made his father's life so prolific. He said, "Two things: My father liked what he did because it mattered to him. Second, my father knew that the way to go fast was meticulous engineering. He always finished what he started. It was all about the current project. He continued to pursue and complete the goal set before him, and didn't waver."

There are a number of reasons that the 426 Hemi is an awesome engine. One of those reasons is Tom Hoover. —Arvid Svendsen

**Drew Hardin**  
mcreview@sbcglobal.net

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**Contributors** Ryan Brutt, Tommy Lee Byrd, Mark Ehlen, Jerry Heasley, Scotty Lachenauer, Bob McClurg, Tom Shaw, Arvid Svendsen

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**VP, Manufacturing & Ad Operations** Greg Parnell  
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### BACK TO THE FUTURE

Great editorial ("The Future Isn't What it Used to Be," Editor's Note, May '15). Yes, automotive technology is changing at a rapid rate, and maybe for the better in certain



areas. The new offerings provide us with more conveniences, safety, gadgetry, appearance, and improved

driver response time. But maybe some of the new car offerings are overaccessorized. Do I really need all the accessories, or is it just a way to titillate our sensibilities and afford the customers an opportunity to dress up a vehicle with options to provide the factories some profitability? I wonder how many more vehicles an OE could sell with fewer option offerings. Maybe we need a car like the 1968 Road Runner. My 1964 Dodge has few technological options. Runs great.

**Jim Thomas**

### EVERYTHING. PERIOD.

After reading countless letters complaining about what is or is not a muscle car, and "You guys need to feature more Fords or Mopars," and so on, I feel compelled to write to you about what I like. Everything. Period. What the folks in the hobby are all doing is trying to preserve a period of time that is so unlike any other. The conflict, the music, the cars. It's the 1960s and early '70s, man! Anything from that era is cool. I understand we all have our favorites, but I get the same goose bumps from a Charger 500 as a Nova SS. AMC? Hell yeah! Keep doing what you're doing, guys. I appreciate and respect the job you do. Did I mention I wasn't even around until 1979? I feel I missed out, but you guys bring that time to me. Thank you!

**Donnie Grove**

### MUSCLE TRUCKS

In response to Glenn Hager asking about how many muscle truck fans are out there (Letters, Apr. '15), please know that there are plenty, myself included. The Rancheros and El Caminos are in a unique class where they are both muscle cars and muscle trucks at the same time. Kind of like shampoo and conditioner all in one. You get the best of each in one vehicle. Prices are still fairly reasonable, and they are a blast to drive.

I have a 1967 Fairlane Ranchero 500XL with the factory 390 V-8, C6 Select-Shift Cruise-O-Matic transmission, and 9-inch

### PILOT CAR

I've noticed the recent misuse of the term *pilot car* in your magazine ("Camaro Number One at GM Nats," Up Front, May '15), at auctions, and in automotive reality programs. There is a difference between a General Motors pilot car, which never has a VIN or is sold to the public, and the early production cars that are for public consumption. These early production cars (with VINs) may be used as Product Evaluation Program (PEP) cars, show cars, display cars, press cars, or brass hat cars, or just be sent to the dealerships.

PEP cars are constantly pulled from the line to continually evaluate components and supplier's products. After the PEP car is pulled from its program, it can be tagged for purchase by GM employees with the proper classifications and is discounted even more than the normal discounts given to employees.

Pilot cars are used to test the assembly line and do not have a VIN. Pilot parts will go down the line a couple of months before the production cars for public consumption. Pilot cars usually hit the line in March or April, with the production cars beginning in June for release to the public in September.

Completed pilot cars and components, if not crushed and scrapped, could be used



for crash testing or sold as a body-in-white to racers. The more complete ones used to be given to factory racers. Since there were no VINs there were no titles. The cars would be sold on a bill of sale, usually for a buck. For many years General Motors would have their factory racers return the race cars to the factory. The factory wanted to make sure these cars were disposed of—sold as scrap.

So, bottom line, General Motors pilot cars and components do not have VINs and serial numbers because they are not for public consumption. But many times an engineer on a certain program will follow a particular PEP car and tag it. Possibly some of the hype on a couple of these early production cars, with low VIN numbers, are PEP cars being incorrectly called pilot cars.

**Dr. Eric M. Schiffer**  
President, Royal Pontiac Club of America



axle. It may not be the beast that many muscle cars are, but it certainly can light it up when needed.

**Stan**



It would be great to see an article about the '59-'73 muscle trucks. I like all makes of

cars. I currently own a '68 GTX, a '69 AMX, a '69 Coronet R/T convertible, a '70 Charger RT/SE, and a '70 454SS/LS6 El Camino. Keep up the great articles about the cars.

**Peter Wilson**



### MORE ON THE TEARDROP HOOD

This is a response to the letter from John Johnson in regards to whether a bubble hood scoop belongs on a Chevelle project (Letters, Apr. '15). Well, this is my Chevelle. It has the bubble hood scoop, and I think it fits my car perfectly! I have owned this car for 36 years, and after a longer-than-planned freshening up I will have it back on the street this year, complete with that scoop. Thanks for a great publication.

**Eric Berge** 

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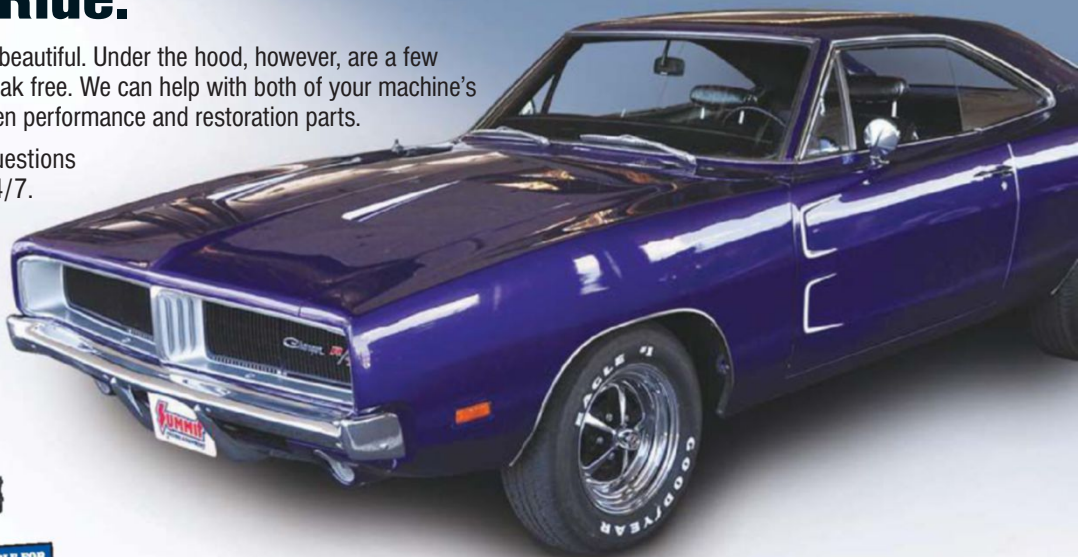
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By Drew Hardin

## Inline Tube Says Thank You

In the 20 years since opening its doors, Inline Tube has grown into one of the restoration industry's premiere manufacturers of muscle car parts, with a catalog of more than 27,000 part numbers. That huge inventory, in fact, prompted a recent expansion of its Shelby Township headquarters, about 30 miles north of downtown Detroit. The 15,000-square-foot addition nearly doubled the company's footprint to 35,000 square feet. We recently toured the facility during Inline Tube's annual open house and car show. It's an event that brothers John and James Kryta, co-owners, host to say thank you to their customers.

—Barry Kluczyk



■ Tom Johnson's red 1968 4-4-2 spent 25 years with an Arizona car dealer before he brought it to Michigan. The car only has about 40,000 miles on it, but the 400 engine has been replaced with a big-torque 455.

■ This 1962 Plymouth Savoy has a 440 engine with plenty of overlap dialed into the camshaft, which delivers a spine-shivering lope amplified by the barest of exhaust systems. The car, owned by Dave Schoenfeldt, even has a 2½-inch altered wheelbase.



## Favorite Hemi?

The passing of Tom Hoover, father of the 426 Hemi (see Arvid Svendsen's tribute on page 4), prompted us to poll our Facebook visitors about their favorite Hemi muscle car. The model with the most votes was the 1971 Hemi 'Cuda, followed by the 1969 Super Bee. Replies also included the 1965 A990 Dodge, 1969 and '70 Charger, Superbird, and—from our diehard Ford fanatic Mark Dellacqua—Boss 429.



JERRY HEASLEY PHOTO

## Next Gen Camaro Debuts



Chevrolet has dubbed the 2016 Camaro the sixth-generation model. While the difference between it and the fifth-gen car isn't as pronounced as, say, the difference between the first two Camaro generations, Chevy says just two parts carry over from the previous model: the rear Bow Tie emblem and the SS badge.

The new Camaro is slightly smaller than

the outgoing model, and its platform is lighter and stiffer, making for a more "nimble" driving experience, says Chevy. While three engines will be offered, our eyes are on the new 6.2L direct-injected LT1 in the SS (coming over from the Corvette Stingray), which will produce 455 hp and 455 lb-ft of torque, an improvement over the 426/420 numbers from last year's V-8. Buyers can choose either a six-speed



manual or eight-speed automatic transmission for any of the Camaro's three engines.

SS models will roll on standard 20-inch aluminum wheels with Eagle F1 Asymmetric 3 run-flat tires, and be fitted with Brembo four-piston disc brakes at all four corners. Magnetic Ride Control, previously available only on the ZL1, will now be optional on the SS. All Camaro models get a new Driver Mode Selector that tailors throttle progression, shift mapping, power steering calibration, StabiliTrak, and other functions for Tour, Sport, Snow/Ice, and—in SS models only—Track conditions.

When can you get one? "Later this year," says Chevy.





■ Pontiac engine-building guru Dan Jensen brought this rare 1969 Firebird equipped with the 350 H.O. engine and four-speed manual transmission. Only 2,455 Firebirds were equipped with the 325hp H.O. engine. This one still wears its original Limelight Green paint and Green Custom interior.



## Revell Partners with Chip Foose

Plastic model kit maker Revell has inked a three-year licensing agreement with custom car designer and TV personality Chip Foose that will add six new model car kits to its existing Foose collection. Among them will be Revell's first-ever predecorated kits (including a Challenger SRT8) featuring Foose-created paint schemes, wheel designs, and special Foose renderings used only on the Revell box art. Two more cars in the line will be chosen by ballot on the Revell and Foose social media sites.

"Our new Foose kits will give both the casual model builder and hardcore enthusiast more opportunities to 'own' their own Chip Foose cars, and have the thrill of 'building' them just as Chip does with his full-scale, one-of-a-kind vehicles," said Lou Aguilera, Revell's vice president and general manager, seen here with Foose. Look for the first of the new kits later this year. **NCA**



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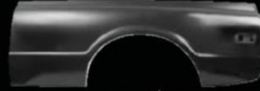
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69

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THROUGH  
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1964  
THROUGH  
1972



By Jerry Heasley



**L**ooking at an eBay ad for a 1969 Camaro Z/28 for sale in Calgary, Graeme Browne got a funny feeling. He did not recognize the name on the listing, but he did recognize the car sitting inside the shop of his good friend Ross Cameron in Calgary, just 20 minutes away.

Graeme says, "Right away I phoned Ross and asked, 'Is that Dean Watts' old car?'"

When Ross said yes, Graeme shot back, "You can end that eBay auction right now. That's a real Canadian Zed with docs, and I'm on my way over there to get it."

Graeme went down and inspected the car with good friend Mike Thorpe, who raced against this Z/28 in the 1970s. He has also restored Camaros for 40-plus years and is a legend in the Camaro hobby.

A small circle of five or six "buddies"

had owned this Z/28—a race car since 1970—in western Canada since 1969. And now, Graeme Browne was about to join that small group.

"These guys raced that car all over the Pacific Northwest. They went to swap meets together. They still hang out with one another. The original owner, Kym Miller, is still drag racing to this day."

Graeme was excited to have a shot at buying this Z/28. Since the car was Canadian, documentation was not a problem. Yes, the firewall tag on this car was stamped with "X77" to denote a Z/28, but paperwork increases value, Graeme believes. He goes even further to say, "Canadian Zeds are worth substantially more than U.S. Zeds because of the provenance that comes with the GM Canada build sheets. Chevrolet made 20,302 Zed 28s in 1969, but today there are well over

40,000 registered in the U.S. alone."

(Do we need to tell you that Canadians call the letter Z "zed"?)

Ross already had a Canadian build sheet for the Z/28. GM Vintage Services in Oshawa will document, for a small fee, every GM car built and sold in Canada, including overseas exports.

This Z/28's original engine and four-speed were long gone, but the saving grace was that drag racing preserved the body, which was 100 percent rust free with only 22,000 miles on it.

Graeme called the original owner, Kym Miller, for the car's history. Kym ordered this Rallye Green Z/28 with Endura front bumper from Bowes and Herron Chevrolet in Fort St. John, British Columbia, on March 28, 1969. It was delivered through an affiliate dealer, Liedtke Motor Products Ltd. in Fort Nelson, B.C., on May 9, 1969. Incredibly, Kym still had the original handwritten dealer order, which he scanned and emailed to Graeme along with many of his early drag racing photos.

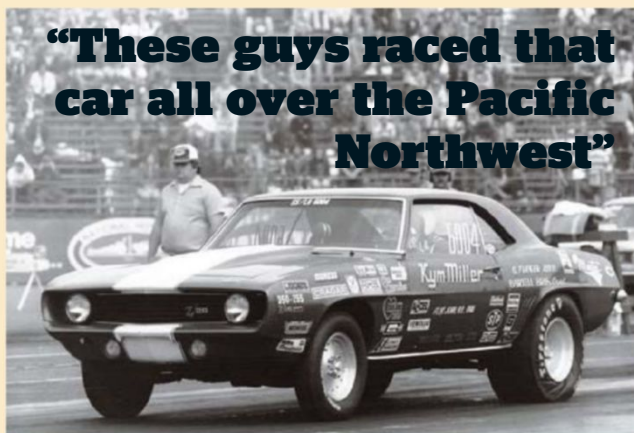
Kym drove the Z/28 on the street for a while. He took the car on a holiday and was passing through a little ski town called Kimberley in British Columbia when he spotted an off-highway drag race. Intrigued, he asked organizers if he could enter. They said yes, if he would pull the hubcaps and beauty rings off the Z/28. Kym pulled from the trunk his camping tent and lawn chairs, one of which his wife sat in all day to watch her husband win the race.

Bitten by the drag racing bug, Kym street- and bracket-raced the Z/28 for a season and then converted the car to Super Stock. He went on to win the 1978 Northwest Division Championship for NHRA.

"He raced 350/255L Automatic class throughout most of the 1970s," Graeme says. "When it was sold to Randy Becker in



■ Former owner Kym Miller's 1969 Z/28 was a roller when Graeme Browne bought it and began a ground-up restoration.



**"These guys raced that car all over the Pacific Northwest"**

■ Here is the 1969 Z/28 in all its glory, circa 1974 in Seattle, drag racing with Kym Miller at the wheel.



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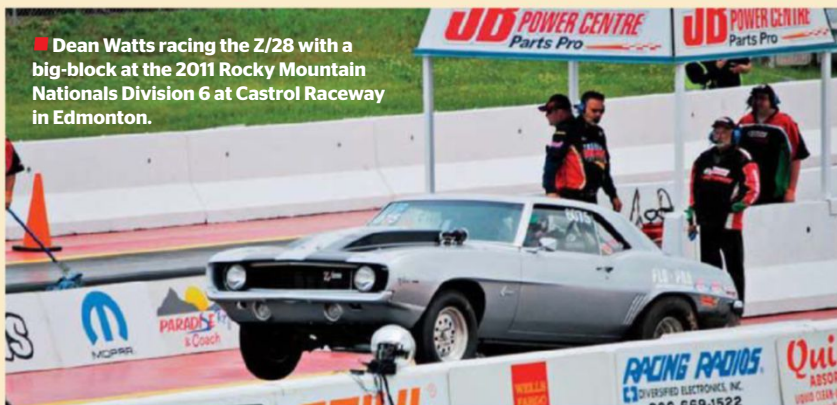
# RARE FINDS



■ There was no engine in the car when Graeme bought it. But he tracked down a DZ block and correct vintage Z/28 parts for a stock rebuild. Remarkably, he has also tracked down the car's original cowl-induction hood to replace the 4-inch hood that was on it when he bought it.



■ Graeme's 10-year-old son, Devon, sits behind the wheel, with the interior still in as-found condition. He and his 8-year-old brother, Carter, are "future owners," says Graeme.



■ Dean Watts racing the Z/28 with a big-block at the 2011 Rocky Mountain Nationals Division 6 at Castrol Raceway in Edmonton.



1980, it continued for a couple years as a small-block JA class Super Stock. When it finally went up to Edmonton, Shawn Tracey converted it to a big-block car and had the cage updated—it was a pretty meager cage from the 1970s—to a full 12-point cage, and then upgraded it to ladder bar suspension with mini tubs. They kept the original diff, which is still in the car. The 12-bolt lived its entire life in that car and had been tortured with 750 to 800 hp."

Graeme is still researching the car's drag racing history. The Z/28 was a "roller" when he got it: big-block out, tranny out, interior still somewhat intact, including original dash, gauges, carpet, and door panels. The floor had been welded up and modified with subframe connectors and the rollcage.

"I bought it complete as it is pictured coming out of the trailer there with that 4-inch cowl hood and all the race decals," says Graeme.

Graeme considered restoring the Z/28 as a day-two race car. However, he knew setting up the Z/28 with the ladder bars in the back and the rollcage would give him a Camaro that "squeaked and groaned, but with no back seat," so he would not be able to "put the kids in the back and go for ice creams."

Graeme will keep the car's race history alive with a website (x77z28.com) that will include pictures. But he will restore the car to day one status. **MCR**

Do you have a **RARE FIND** story to share? Contact Jerry Heasley at [jerry@jerryheasley.com](mailto:jerry@jerryheasley.com).

■ Seattle, circa 1982. In the foreground is the Z/28 painted green with a white stripe (Baldwin Motion style) when Randy Becker owned and raced the car. We also see other heavy hitter muscle cars: Buck McKinney's famous LS6 Chevelle Convertible Special and the Mad Trapper Hemi 'Cuda behind it. In the background are Lee Shepherd and Buddy Morrison with their Reher-Morrison 1981 Camaro Pro Stock. Graeme will preserve the Camaro's race history with a website that will include photos such as this one.

**"Canadian Zeds are worth substantially more than U.S. Zeds"**

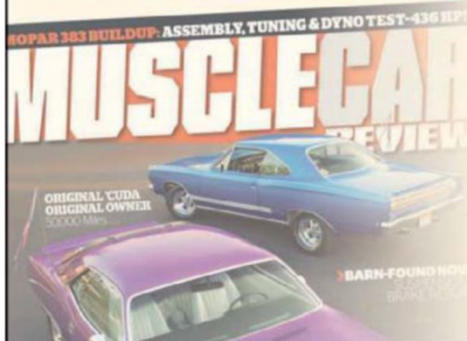
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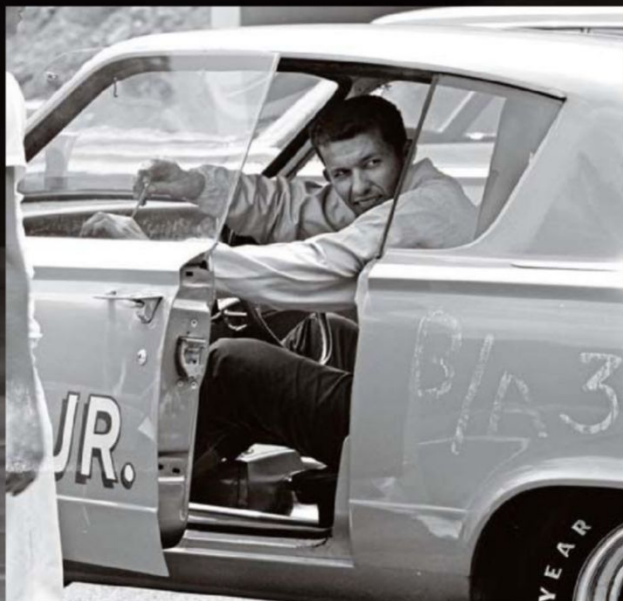
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# MUSCLE CAR **REWIND**



Photos:  
*Hot Rod Archive*

**T**he photo of what remains of Richard Petty's 43 Jr. drag race Barracuda in Ryan Brutt's "Mopars in the Field" story (page 32) got us hunting the archive for photos of the race car and some background on King Richard's short-lived drag racing career.

Petty and Chrysler's new 426 Hemi so dominated the 1964 NASCAR season that NASCAR owner Bill France outlawed the engine for 1965. Rather than switching brands—or engines—Petty decided to forego racing NASCAR for the season. Instead, he built a Hemi-powered Barracuda for the





drags. A story in the Feb. 1965 issue of *Hot Rod* titled "Petty's Powder Keg" shows the car going together, including the gutted body shell, tubular reinforcements for the chassis, and major setback for the "big 426 Plymouth Golden Commando hemi head" engine. For its initial shakedown runs at the Piedmont dragstrip near Greensboro, North Carolina, the car was lettered with the 43 Jr. number; later the car carried the name "Outlawed" on the doors in reference to NASCAR's treatment of the Hemi.


The car showed promise. At Piedmont it turned mid-10-second e.t.'s and top speeds of 140 mph. "I got a ton of publicity because

nobody had ever successfully gone from stock cars to drag racing," Petty wrote in his autobiography, *King Richard I*. "It didn't take long to get the hang of it."

Petty hit the exhibition racing circuit in November 1964, but the effort came to a stop in February 1965 when, during a match race with Arnie Beswick, a broken front suspension sent the Barracuda into a crowd of spectators, killing an 8-year-old boy and injuring eight others. Devastated, Petty ordered the remains of the Outlawed car buried on his property, so he (or anyone else) would never have to see it again.

A second drag Barracuda was built, the

car you see here. Petty continued to race, but without much enthusiasm. Dick Wells, *Hot Rod's* managing editor, covered the first NHRA Springnationals at the then-new Bristol International Dragway and caught Petty on his way to winning B/Altered with a 10.62/131-mph pass.

Notice the new car isn't called Outlawed? Without the Chryslers on the track, attendance at NASCAR tracks fell off so sharply in early 1965 that France rescinded his decision. The Hemi was back in NASCAR for the 1966 season, and so was Petty, his Barracuda relegated to the car graveyard behind his shop. 





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# Chevelle on the Roof

## A South-of-the-Border Find

By Jerry Heasley

**“L**ook, you can see the car from here,” Chuy said. Sitting in the back of Michael Lightbourn’s four-door pickup, I had to stick my head out the side window and look up. I could barely see the shape of a car wrapped in tarps and parked on a roof, but not a roof like we see in America.

We were in an old neighborhood of Juarez, Mexico, where every building looked like it was made of concrete and there were no yards with grass, just dirt streets devoid of life. The area was not a ghost town, but in the middle of the day I saw no people walking around.

Chuy Gonzalez was our guide. He drove Michael’s truck up the street until the flat roof, once very high above us, was at eye level. I stepped out of the pickup and was even with the roof.

Juarez is not a place for the weak of heart. Drug cartels have turned the town into a battle zone. In the last few years the violence has “lessened,” but it is still risky.

Two men appeared from out of nowhere talking excitedly in Spanish. A younger person wheeled up in a bicycle to see what was going on. I wondered what they were saying.

Suddenly the street was alive with people. I could feel all eyes on me. I slid my camera around to my side in a vain attempt to hide my photographic intentions. Michael and his friend Chuy had been here before. They knew this man. They were explaining to him what was going on.

The men began lifting heavy cinderblocks then peeling back two tarps, one white and the other green. First I noticed an SS badge on the black rubber bumper cover.

“This is a real SS396,” Chuy told me in English. Michael agreed. Chuy had checked out the car previously.

The animated man speaking Spanish, Michael told me, owned the Chevelle. I imagine he felt like he might be getting some dollars this time, and probably from the gringo.

“He wants \$3,900,” Michael said.

The car appeared rust-free except for the passenger-side rear quarter. I opened the passenger door. The interior looked like a storage bin for trim pieces, including a doorsill plate for a Ford Ranger pickup. I could see a floor shifter and an SS dash with the glovebox door missing. The trunk also held a plethora of trim pieces, plus a four-barrel carburetor.

“He said he bought the car in Montana and drove it back,” Michael said.

“When?”

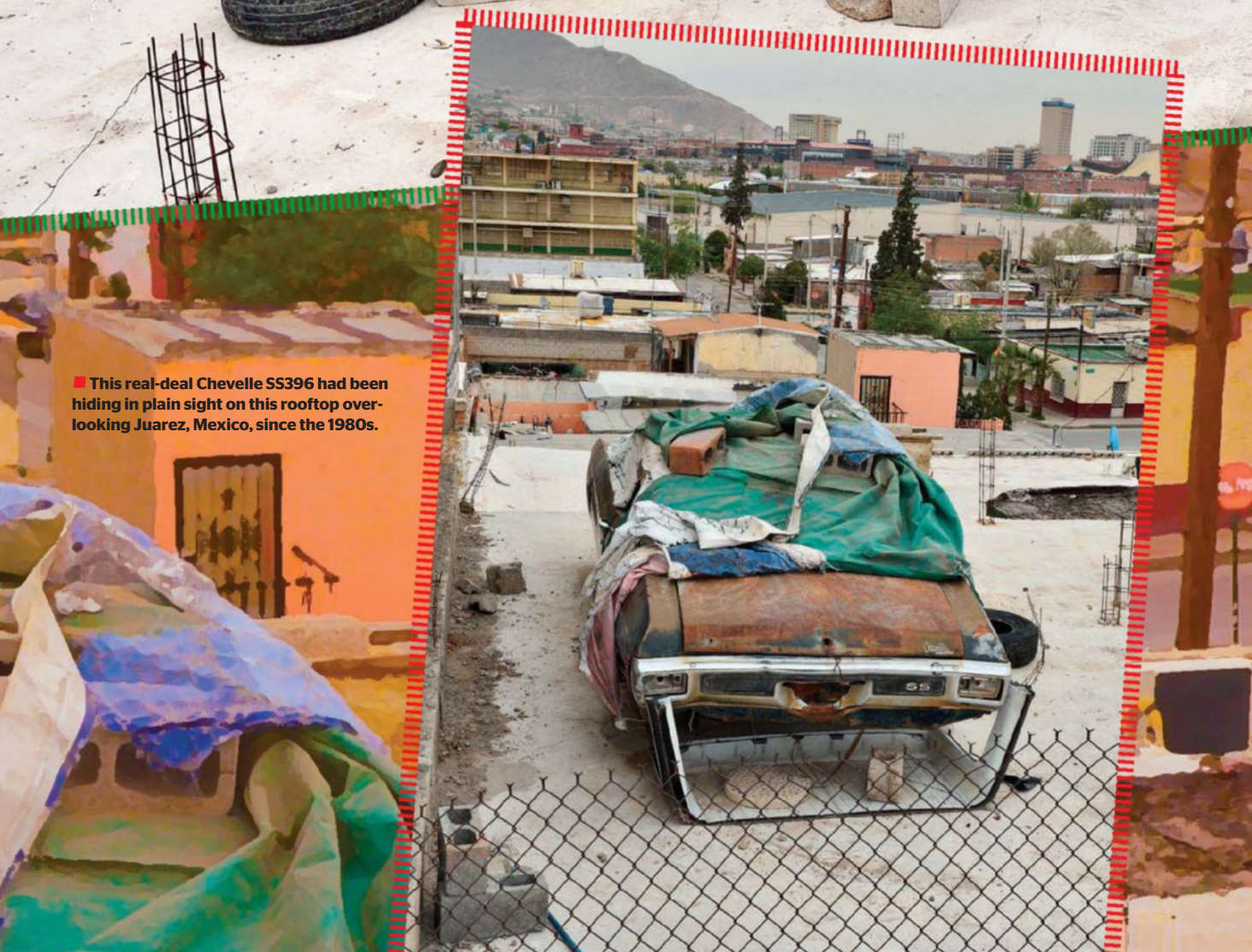
“I think in the 1970s, but the car has been on this rooftop, I believe, since sometime in the 1980s.”



**“The interior looked like a storage bin for trim pieces”**



■ This real-deal Chevelle SS396 had been hiding in plain sight on this rooftop overlooking Juarez, Mexico, since the 1980s.





■ The Chevelle was protected by a cyclone fence and covered with tarps and cinderblocks.

There was no engine, no transmission, but the 1970 Chevelle was a real SS. Chuy crawled under the car to check out what appeared to be the stock 12-bolt rearend. Disc brakes, larger sway bars, and the SS dash were more indications of a true SS. "He would take \$3,500," Michael said. The price wasn't real cheap, but not bad for a rust-free car. I noticed cuts in the body. I pointed them out to Michael.

"They look like battle scars from Juarez," he said with a laugh. Scars caused by a big sharp knife were what they looked like to me. After 10 minutes and no deal made, I had a feeling the owner would sell for even less.

When no deal was made, the owner told us about the whereabouts of a GTO Judge. "He'll take us there for \$100," Michael said to me.

"Is the GTO for sale?" I asked.

"Don't know. Maybe."

"Nah, I think I'll pass on that. What about this car?"

For now, we wanted to drive on and look at more cars Chuy had already found. As the owner of Street Toys in Juarez, he got many leads on cars in the city. Michael was one of his customers.

I asked, "In the States, how much would they want for a Chevelle in this condition?"

"Maybe eight or nine grand," Michael guessed.

Chuy and several of the men began putting the tarp and the cinderblocks back on the body. Later, Michael would come back to buy the Chevelle. For now, we pressed on to see more cars in Juarez, living dangerously and loving every minute of it. **MCR**

■ Though the body was largely free of rust, it wore its share of bumps and scars.

■ The big-block 396 and automatic transmission were gone.





■ Pulling the tarps revealed an SS396 that had a battle-scarred body but was pretty much rust-free.



■ The interior had become a storage bin for trim pieces—and not all of them for this car.

■ The car's \$3,900 asking price wasn't cheap, but it wasn't bad for a rust-free Chevelle SS.



■ The trunk was also full of car parts.



By Scotty Lachenauer

**M**opar fanatic Bill Stone was way ahead of the curve. While other 20-somethings were out blowing their hard-earned money on beer binges and new plastic cars, young Bill was investing his money in American-made four-wheeled muscle. And there was one body style that really got his heart thumping: the sleek and potent Chrysler E-Body.

The car-crazy 15-year-old picked a 1973 'Cuda as his first means of transportation (and yes, he still owns it). Over the years, Bill couldn't let an E-Body pass him by without making a generous offer for the car's pink slip. He eventually filled his family's barns and garages with an assortment of E-Body rides, knowing that these gems of Detroit would someday bring a handsome ransom on the open market.

Bill became especially enamored of the convertibles, particularly ones of the Barracuda/'Cuda persuasion. By the 1990s he had at least a baker's dozen of these stylish drop tops in garages and on his open property, including a matched set of topless 1970 Plum Crazy big-block four-speed 'Cudas, one of which he recently sold to a celebrity.

# It's the **"NORM"**

**Making a Classic E-Body  
Whole Again**





**“The car had been  
sitting since 1983”**





■ The white interior (and white vinyl top) nicely accent the Challenger's Top Banana yellow paint outside. Pistol Grip shifter rows a four-speed trans linked to the Dana axle.



■ The Challenger's original 440 Six Pack motor had been replaced by a race motor early in the car's life. Miraculously, the original motor was located in a small speed shop not far from Grand Spaulding Dodge, where the car was originally sold.

■ Bill Stone's FY1 Top Banana Yellow Challenger was not only born with the cool combination of a white interior and top; it was also built with the Super Track Pack option. Checking the A34 box got you a bulletproof Dana out back stuffed with 4.10 gears, along with power disc brakes up front.



**"Bill moved out of his apartment and into the garage with the Challenger"**

After the 1990s Bill sold most of the convertibles to finance a choice piece of property on which he built himself a new home. He also started a business, which brought him work in the Windy City. The Midwest has always been a hotbed of classic muscle, and Chicago proved that point rather quickly to Bill. Searching the Internet one night, he found an auction for a car just 100 miles away from his temporary home. It was a

Top Banana Yellow 1970 Challenger.

Turns out that the Dodge was not only a white top/white interior car but was also an original 440 Six Pack/four-speed car, loaded with the rare Super Track Pack option. Even though the original engine was no longer in the car, Bill was still very interested in making the Challenger his own.

But there was more. Bill was told the car was native to the Chicago area. So he contacted Larry Weiner, a well-known Mopar collector who owns all the original Grand Spaulding Dodge paperwork. GSD was known as the number-one Dodge performance dealership back in the 1960s, owned by "Mr. Norm" Kraus, a Dodge specialist and celebrity pitchman. Larry checked his list and identified this particular Challenger as being sold through Mr. Norm's dealership. This puzzle was starting to come together.

When Bill contacted the owner with an offer, the man told Bill he didn't want to sell the car. The owner had been tipped off that his Challenger was a Mr. Norm's car, which changed its sales status rather quickly. Things weren't looking so good

for Bill, as the car's owner started to play a little hardball.

Bill then talked to Scott DePace, another avid Mopar collector. A friend of Scott's in Alaska, who has access to a large database of Mopar VINs, had alerted Scott to the car online. After checking the car's numbers, they found a match to an engine that he had in the database, an engine that Scott miraculously had in his possession! It hadn't strayed far from its original home in Chicago, as Scott found it in a small engine repair shop a few miles from the original Grand Spaulding dealership.

Bill stepped up and bought the engine from Scott, and then bought the original Mr. Norm's paperwork on the Challenger from Larry. Armed with two-thirds of this puzzle, Bill struck a deal with the owner, ultimately reuniting the car with its original engine, some 40 years after it was removed from the chassis.

The car had been sitting since 1983, as shown on the license plate registration tag. It turns out the hot Challenger had been made into an 1980s street machine by the last owner, complete with hand-painted

## AT A GLANCE

### 1970 CHALLENGER R/T

**Owned by:** Bill Stone

**Restored by:** Owner

**Engine:** 440ci/390hp Six Pack V-8

**Transmission:** 4-speed manual

**Rearend:** Dana 60 with 4.10 gears and Super Track Pack

**Wheels:** 15x7 Rally

**Tires:** E60-15 BFGoodrich

**Special parts:** Super Track Pack, Pistol Grip shifter, white vinyl top, white interior



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R/T stripes and typical slot mags that were so the rage in the day. Once the owner finished his modifications to the car, he decided not to drive it much, and then put it away for good a few months later. And there it sat for 30 years.

Bill was promised a spot in the Mr. Norm's 50th anniversary showcase at the 2013 Muscle Car & Corvette Nationals if he could restore the Challenger to its former glory by the opening date. He received the car in early April, stripped it, and had it ready for paint by the 22nd of that same month. During its time away, Bill readied parts that he had and obtained ones that he needed. After some pushing, the car was back in September, with just seven weeks until show date.

Bill moved out of his rental apartment and into the garage with the Challenger.

Talk about dedicated! There he spent every moment outside of work putting the car back together. He regularly sent photos of his progress to the MCACN staff to show that the car would be ready. With just three days to spare, the Challenger was completed. From painted shell to running/driving showstopper in just seven weeks, it was as near a miracle as Bill has ever been a part of, mostly because this was the first car Bill ever restored. Talk about trial by fire!

The history of the car really gelled at the MCACN show. While on the show floor, Bill's wife Tammie was approached by Eric Agase, who seemed interested in the car. He wanted to know where Bill had purchased the car and from whom. Turns out Eric was the unknown third owner and sold the car to the man who sold the car to Bill. He also told Bill of the second

owner, who was a personal friend of his.

Eric went on to say that his friend purchased the car and then removed the drivetrain to install a race motor. The 440/6 was then stored in the small auto parts dealership, which was the same place that Bill went to purchase the numbers matching motor. It never moved for 40 years and was never far from its original body.

The car was ordered by Grand Spaulding Dodge in July 1969, but for some reason it was kept on display in the dealership and not sold until May 1971.

More details came out about the car. The original driver-side fender was smashed by an angry second owner. It was replaced with a Lime Light-colored fender that was painted to match. It seems the passenger fender also got some frustra-

## **"Things weren't looking so good for Bill, as the car's owner was starting to play a little hardball"**

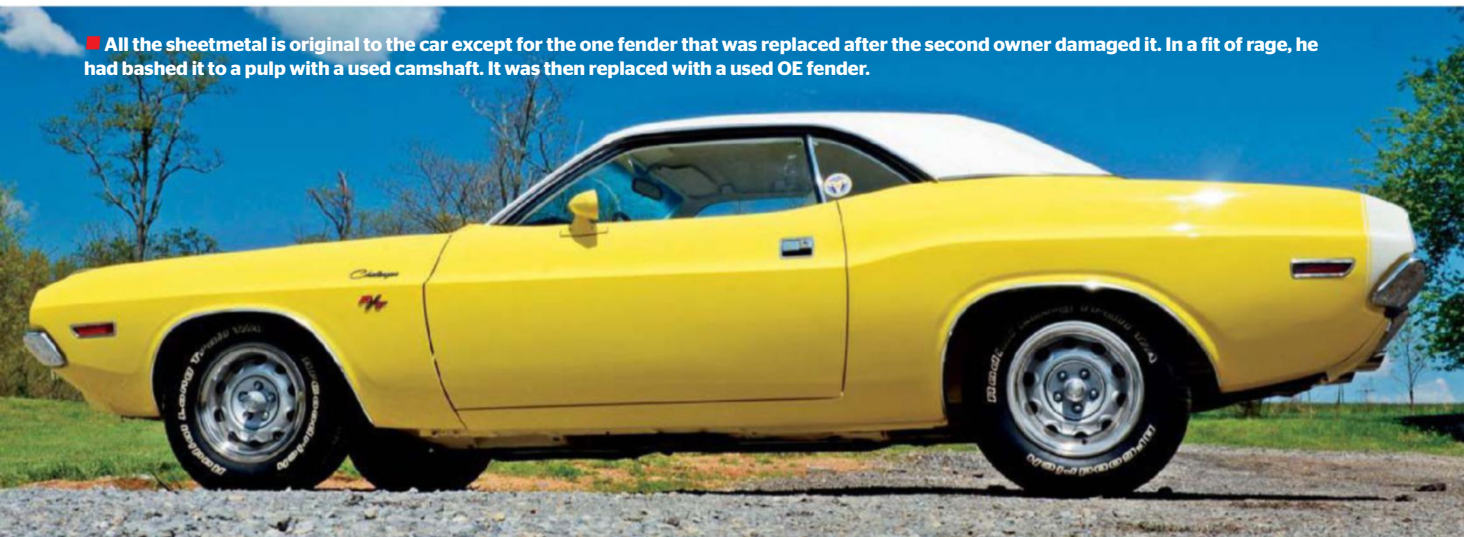


■ Bill's newly restored Challenger made its debut at the 2013 MCACN show, where "Mr. Norm" Kraus posed with Bill's wife, Tammie.



■ While the Challenger was in Mr. Norm's MCACN booth, he auto-graphed it in several places.

■ All the sheetmetal is original to the car except for the one fender that was replaced after the second owner damaged it. In a fit of rage, he had bashed it to a pulp with a used camshaft. It was then replaced with a used OE fender.





■ After the restoration, Bill threw on these tires for transporting the Challenger. He still hasn't decided on Goodyear repops or the more basic Goodrich T/As. Interestingly enough, the order card for this particular Challenger shows that black sidewalls were put on the car, but the window sticker tells a different tale. It states that white letter tires were installed.



tions poured on it; it had a run-in with a hammer claw by the same second owner. Soon thereafter the car made its way to owner number three. Bill still has the original passenger fender, with its putty-filled hammer marks made visible during the car's bodywork.

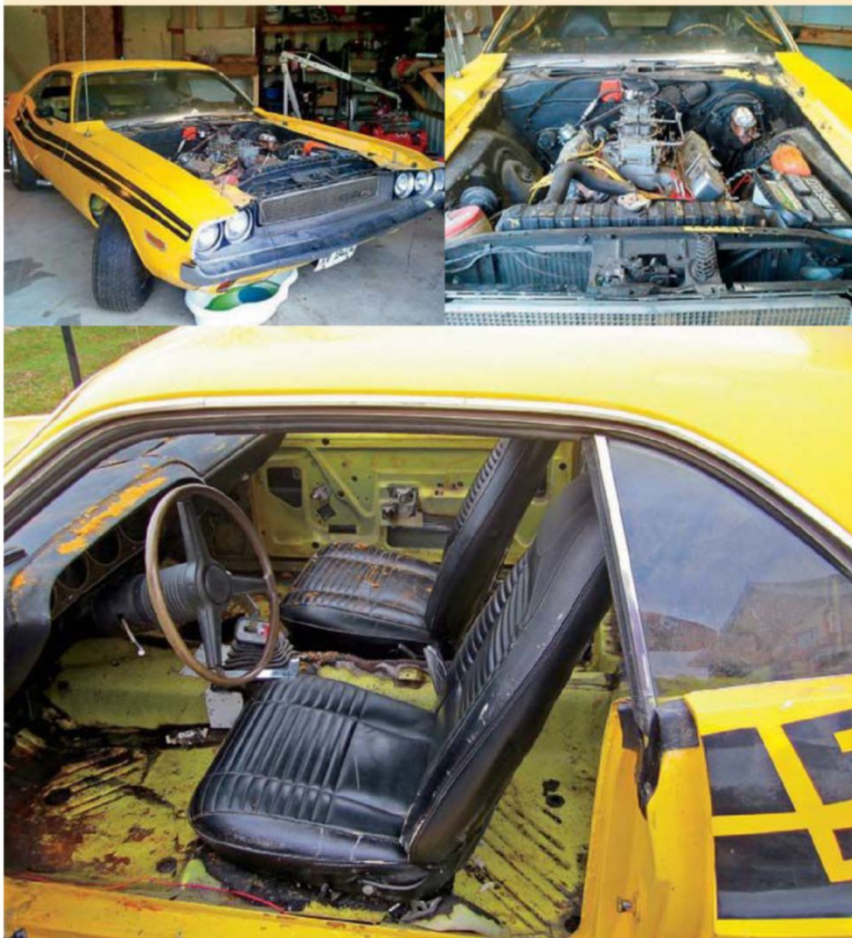
At MCACN, Norm Kraus was not told of the surprise arrival of Bill's Challenger. He was so taken aback by the car when it made its appearance on the show floor that he set it up right next to his sales booth at the show. He ended up signing the car in several spots for Bill, which was

the topping on an extraordinary week for Bill and his family.

Now the Challenger sits in Bill's climate-controlled garage. It is taken out sparingly to shows and gets the pampered treatment befitting a rare car like this. He knows he was fully blessed to have the opportunity to own this car, and to be part of the chain of events that reunited this piece of Chrysler history with its born-with power-plant. Special thanks go out to the Mopar community and their dedicated preservers of its history, without which this car would never have been whole again. **MC**

## IN STORAGE

This Challenger led an active life, as a drag racer in the 1970s and a street machine in the 1980s. It was parked in 1983, until Bill Stone bought it 30 years later. Here's how he found it.



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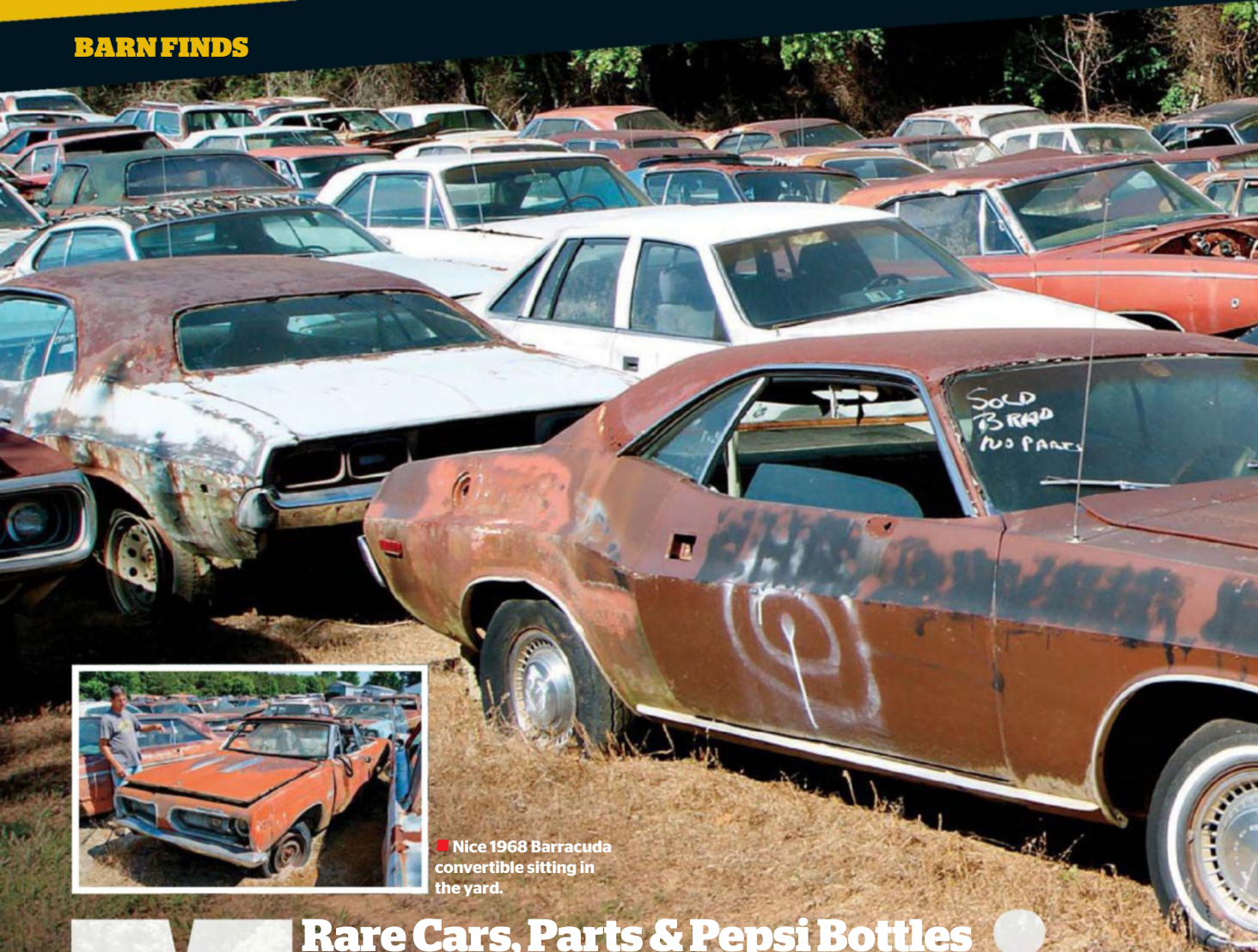
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# Rare Cars, Parts & Pepsi Bottles

# Mopars in

By Ryan Brutt

**Y**ou ever hear the story of how Machu Picchu was found? Hiram Bingham was in the Andes Mountains looking for something else, but a guide knew of some ruins nearby. The guide took him there, yet nothing could be seen until he came around a rock outcropping. And there it was, Machu Picchu in all its jungle-covered glory. This yard I photographed in the hills of North Carolina, while not to that level of discovery, had its own historically significant pieces in the ground.

I was in North Carolina for the 2014 *Hot Rod Power Tour* but got there a few days early to allow myself time to photograph barn finds. A mutual friend relayed me a name and number to call about a few cool cars that were sitting nearby. When I called, a woman picked up. I asked for the gentleman who had all the cars. She told me her husband had owned the cars and had died years ago. Apologizing profusely, I explained that I meant no disrespect, as I was just following up on a lead.

Before I hung up though, I asked if a few of his old cars were still around. She told me that she had one of his old cars still there, a 1968 Road Runner. I was more than welcome to come see the car.

Whenever I drive to a location, I usually check out the area using Google Earth. I do this to see where I'm going so I don't get



■ An original 1971 Plymouth Duster 340 sits nose up.



**"Once I got there, I was devastated"**



■ Real 1971  
Plymouth  
'Cuda sits with  
its own front  
end in the  
trunk!

# the Field



■ This is what remains  
of Richard Petty's 43 Jr.  
drag-racing Barracuda  
(see page 18).



lost, but also to check out the surroundings to see what else is there. The image on my phone showed a large junkyard that was full of cars, but once I got there I was devastated. From the small, one-lane driveway to the house, you could see nothing—not a car or truck anywhere.

Once I pulled down the road, things started to look up. I could see a Challenger race car just over one hill, a truck on the other. As I came around a hill to the house and barn where the owner's wife was meeting me, then I understood. I felt like Bingham coming around that rock outcropping. There was grain silo on one side of the property and trees on the other, and everything else was in a small depression. But there it all was, row upon row of Mopars hidden in the hills.

The owner came out and we went into the barn where her office was. She told me how her husband had collected Mopars for decades. He was well known in the area for what he built and raced. He was good friends with the Pettys. All the Pettys were over there at one point or another. They had collected a bunch of Petty memorabilia through the years, and now it was scattered throughout the property. That collection included probably the largest collection of Richard Petty Pepsi bottles in the world. Case after case of Richard Petty Pepsi. I have not and probably will never see anything like that again.

The barn was storage for many individual parts for cars: rear-end centersections, carbs, intakes, a wall of wheels. There were 426 Hemi parts scattered about. Around the corner I found what the owner's wife had meant when she said she had one of his cars left. All the other cars outside were just projects or junk. But the vehicle in the side garage was the car he drove and worked on. It had his name painted right above the door, a 1968 Road Runner with a Petty prepped 426 Wedge.

Outside were acres upon acres of Mopar muscle cars, with a smattering of GMs and Fords for spice. The owner's wife decided to stay at the house, but her brother walked the property with me. As we walked around the barn I saw a rusted hulk of a car sitting there. He looked at me and asked, "Do you know what this is?" I looked closely, and I knew I had seen the car before. It was the 1965 Barracuda drag car campaigned by Richard Petty.

When NASCAR banned the 426 Hemi, Richard Petty decided to go drag racing. And he did a fairly good job at it. He had this little 1965 Barracuda built with a 426 Hemi and was having a blast. Unfortunately, a piece broke on this car, sending him into the stands and killing a spectator. After that it was pushed into the famous (or infamous) Petty junkyard out behind the house. But as the story goes, when the Pettys went to expand the facility, instead of crushing the car, their friend grabbed it and dumped it behind his barn. A real piece of drag racing and NASCAR history just lying rusting in the weeds behind the barn.

While there was a handful of Chevelle SS cars and a Ford or two, the overwhelming majority were Mopars. You could tell that nobody had been out there in a while. Many of the cars were just left in the field. Some were complete or missing just a handful of pieces.

It became almost hypnotic, row after row of cool cars. Duster 340 here, Super Bee over there, more GTXs than I've seen in one place. It was an absolute honor to be allowed to walk around freely and document all the vehicles that they had there.

After thoroughly walking the yard photographing most of the vehicles in it, I was about to depart when the owner's wife asked if I wanted to see the Hemi in the barn. She had mentioned it earlier, but did not go beyond saying that there was one around. As we opened that last barn the strong scent of dead something blasted out. But there really was a real 426 Hemi tucked away on the side of the barn.

Who would have thought that hidden in the hills of North Carolina would be a yard full of Mopars, nearly untouched by time? **NC**



■ One of the only Chevrolet products on the property is this 1967 Chevelle SS396 crushed by a tree

■ One of many 1972-'74 Dodge Challengers littering the area.

■ A real 1970 Dodge Super Bee, a 383 Magnum car with "stinger" hood still attached.

■ The remains of a 1970 Dodge Coronet R/T sitting among other Mopars.





■ While most of the cars were outside, the barn was used for parts storage. Here's a pile of aluminum intakes and centersections out of 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  rearends.

■ This is the Road Runner the owner was working on when he passed away.

■ Among the Petty parts in the barn was this original NASCAR Hemi intake.

■ A wall of Richard Petty Pepsi bottles—and this was just one of the walls.

■ The owner meant what she said: This is the Hemi in the barn.





## Part 10: Rearend Rebuild

# BASKET CASE CHEVELLE

By Mark Ehlen

**H**aving a 500-plus-horse big-block under the hood of our Basket Case 1970 Chevelle project is exciting, but we're going to need a reliable way to convert that rotational power into linear motion. So this installment of the buildup shows you how the car's 12-bolt rearend was set up.

Like the rest of our Chevelle, the rearend came to Muscle Car Restorations completely stripped down. It would have been nice to have had a complete rearend to put back into the car, but this does give us an







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excuse to make everything new and select the rearend ratio we want.

The 12-bolt housing was cleaned and powdercoated with the frame so it was ready for reassembly. The rest of the parts were in a box, and the axles had been left out long enough to get rusty. It's a given that all the bearings, races, and seals

will be replaced with new parts, but how do you decide about the carrier and the axles? Truthfully, the carrier could have been reused after a good cleanup and a fresh clutch pack. The axles looked OK, but there is really no sure way to know what kind of abuse may have been in their past.

Given the power levels from the big-block and the use of a manual transmission, the decision was made to upgrade to an Auburn Pro series Posi and a pair of Street Axles from Moser Engineering. This way if a pair of really sticky tires ever ends up on the back of this Chevelle, the rear-end will not be the weak link.



**1** The Moser Engineering kit comes with everything necessary for the rebuild, including new bearings, races, shims, seals, and, in this case, a spacer instead of a crush sleeve.

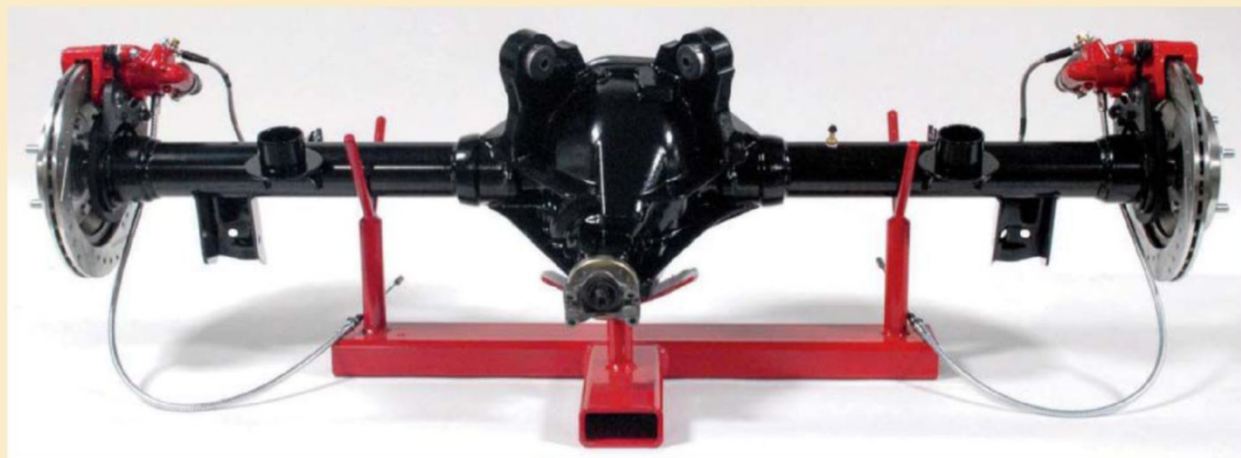


**2** Ring-and-pinion sets are just that: prerun sets with the determined pinion depth scribed on the face of the pinion gear.

**“The axles had been left out long enough to get rusty”**

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If you're interested in a complete rearend swap that will handle much more power—and requires just a weekend to do with common shop knowledge—then check out the full line of Moser Muscle Pak rear assemblies. Moser offers complete rearend packages for those who want an easy-to-swap rearend assembly without having to worry about ordering from different companies and hoping it all bolts together and works. These brand-new housings come with your choice of carrier, gear ratio, and axle-spline count and can be set up with anything from a new factory style drum brake to an aftermarket multipiston-caliper setup. They come with the brake cables and brake lines installed, and the whole assembly is on a skid so that you literally just have to unbolt the old rear and slide the new one in place and bolt it back in. All you do after that is fill with fluid, attach the lines, and bleed the brakes, and you're good to go.





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# TECH

## BASE CHEVROLET

**3** Use the existing shim from the old pinion under the new one to start with if you have it. Otherwise, a 0.030 shim is the factory starting point. With 12 and 41 teeth on the pinion and ring, respectively, this set produces a 3.42 ratio.



**4** The first step is to install both the inner and outer pinion-shaft races. Buy, borrow, or rent an installation tool to avoid damaging the race.

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**5** You'll need a press to install the larger pinion bearing onto the pinion. Do not forget to put the pinion shim between the bearing and the gear.

**6** Here is how the pinion shaft is assembled. Note the use of a spacer instead of a crush sleeve. Spacers are more accurate and can't be overtightened as a sleeve can. Also notice the shims between the spacer and the smaller bearing. These determine the final bearing preload.







**7** With the pinion bolted in place without the spacer, measure the pinion depth from the gasket surface (actually the ring gear centerline) to the face of the gear. You are looking for the measurement scribed on the gear plus or minus 0.002. Use an old pinion nut for this measurement. New nuts should only be used once.



**8** This Auburn Pro Series Posi unit comes assembled and ready to install except for the bearings, which will also have to be pressed in place. It is not only tougher than OE units, it will deliver more torque and faster engagement than stock.

**“The rearend will not be the weak link”**



**9** Before Muscle Car Restorations bolts the ring gear to the carrier, the techs insist on running a file over the mating surfaces to be sure that there are no nicks or burrs that could keep the gear from running perfectly flat.



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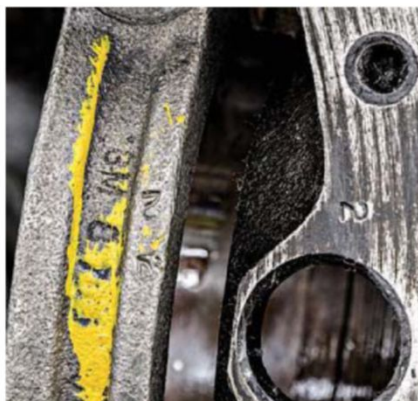
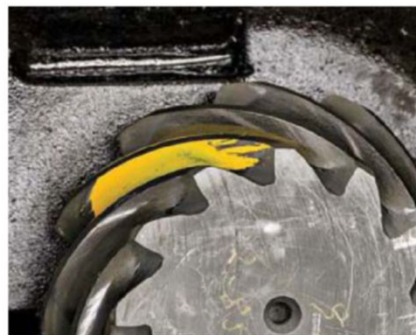




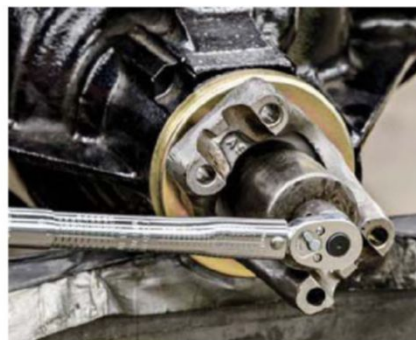
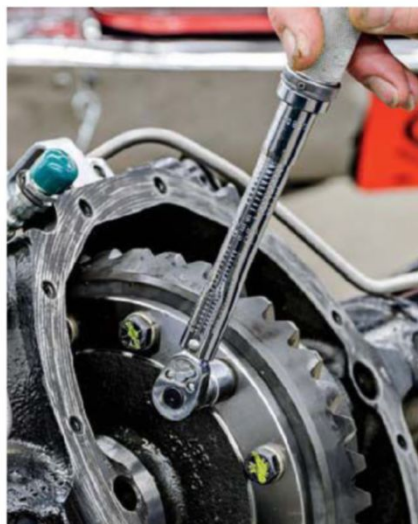
**10** Ring gear bolts are torqued to 45-50 lb-ft. Mark each bolt with yellow as you torque them to be sure you don't miss one, and only use new bolts.



**13** A good smear of a gear-marking compound will show the contact area between the pinion and ring gears. Be sure to check both the drive and coasting sides of each gear. Moving the carrier left or right adjusts the depth of the contact between the gears, while adjusting the pinion depth moves the contact area between the heel and toe of the gear.



**11** It's perfectly fine to use the old bearing caps. Just be sure that they are numbered and that they go back to their original places. Torque the cap bolts to 60-65 lb-ft.



**15** Don't forget the pinion seal before you bolt on the driveshaft yoke. Tighten the nut to 200-225 lb-ft. You can't really overtighten with a spacer, but you can with a crush sleeve.



**12** Measure the ring gear backlash every 90 degrees. You're looking for 0.008-0.012 for street gears, with new sets on the tighter side of this range. Changing the shims on either end of the carrier bearings can move the carrier to the right for less backlash, or left for more.

**14** Pinion preload should measure about 25 lb-in at one of the ring gear bolts. If it's too tight, you'll need more shims between the pinion bearing and the spacer. If too loose, you'll need fewer. Check the preload without the pinion seal in place.



**16** GM 12-bolt rears use a C-clip over the end of the axle to retain it in the housing.

**“This gives us an excuse to make everything new”**



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**17** Moser's Street Axles are about 25 percent stronger than the factory parts and will easily handle whatever the big-block on the other end can generate.



**18** Once the C-clips are positioned on the ends of the axles, the axles are pulled slightly outward, which sets the C-clips into the side gears. This locks the C-clips onto the axles. A shaft is then inserted between the axles to prevent them from moving inward. Thus the axles are locked into the carrier. All that remains is to bolt on the cover and fill it with gear oil. **MC**

## SOURCES

**Moser Engineering**  
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**W**ay back before shakers shook and numbers matched, men built big cars with big engines. Sometimes factories built cars with big engines, but many times cars factories built had smaller engines. Smaller engines weren't big enough. Bigger engines were needed, bigger and more powerful. Much more powerful. Big engines were loved throughout the land, and legions of big, powerful engines could be found for sale in the marketplace of many cities and villages. Because big engines were powerful, relatively cheap, and available from many in the marketplace, times were good and the people danced. Well, metaphorically speaking anyway.

Back then, real gearheads wrenched on their cars. Hoods were up on the weekends because valves were being adjusted, header bolts tightened, points replaced, and carbs jetted. Improvements

were always in progress. Guys who left their cars stock were thought to be either mechanical simpletons or whipped because the lady of the house didn't like loud exhaust and couldn't shift a stick. They were the geeks and squares of the day.

On the other hand, guys who wrenched on their cars were always out and about, testing their workmanship, pitting their cars against rivals, and plotting their next modifications. To them, stock and original were not a destination but a starting point.

Jerry Ostalecki's 1964 Galaxie 500XL is an engine swap car, just the way you'd find many, if not most, serious boulevard bombers back in cruising's heyday. Biggest possible engine, trick induction, headers, custom wheels, and even a teardrop hood. Yessir. It's a big car that delivers a big punch.

Jerry started with a well-preserved California black-plate 1964 Galaxie 500XL, Ford's top-of-the-line fullsize ride, and began to



**“Back then, real gearheads wrenched on their cars”**



create the kind of car he grew up with. The engine being the heart of the matter, he didn't skimp. He had a 428 Cobra Jet balanced and blueprinted, then assembled around a Comp Cams dual-duration 3/4 cam and valvetrain. Heads were ported and polished and treated to hardened valve seats and oiling improvements. A Melling high-volume pump keeps oil flowing where it's supposed to, and a windage tray in the Canton 7-quart pan keeps it from splashing onto the crank during high-G acceleration. Taking advantage of all that extra airflow capacity is a trio of Holley two-barrel carbs, just like Ford used to offer on its 1961 and '62 390s. Tri-Y headers and Flowmaster mufflers continue the enhanced airflow on the exhaust side.

Rounding out the driveline are a 31-spline Traction-Lok differential with new 3.50:1 gears, and tough Strange Engineering 31-spline street/strip axles. Detroit Eaton leaf springs get the ride

height where it belongs, and Traction Master traction bars help ensure proper hookup when the power is flowing.

Jerry spent extra effort on the interior too, completely rebuilding the dash with N.O.S. gauges and trim, and rebuilding the bucket seats with fresh foam and new trim. Riding high on the dash is a big-dial Sun Super Tach, reading from zero to 9,000 rpm.

"This car is 100 percent rust-free," Jerry comments. He should know. It was stripped to bare metal prior to receiving a smooth, new coat of Rangoon Red.

Styling was a strong point on the 1964 Galaxie. The fastback roof, introduced in January 1963, continued, giving the two-door hardtop a sleek profile. The clean, well-shaped body lines showed none of the weirdness that seemed to affect some Detroit models of just a few years earlier.

Jerry added a Crites teardrop hood, an idea picked up from



# Primal

## Recalling the Days of Fullsize Fireworks

By Tom Shaw





## FORD'S FULLSIZE HIERARCHY FOR 1964

**Custom Super stripper.** Hubcaps. Three vertical chevrons at the front of the fenders. No window trim. Basic interior. Two-door sedan only.

**Custom 500** Adds drip rail molding, narrow side spear trim, and upgraded interior with carpeting. Two-door or four-door sedan only.

**Galaxie 500** Full-length side spear, window frame brightwork, fender top ornaments, upgraded seat upholstery and door panels, electric clock, glove-box light, ashtray light. Two-door or four-door sedan, two-door or four-door hardtop, convertible.

**Galaxie 500XL** Top trim. XL badging inside and out, buckets-and-console interior, brightwork on pedals, deluxe door panels with courtesy lights, spinner wheel covers. Two-door or four-door hardtop, convertible.

■ In the pre-pony car days, a maker's fortunes rode on its fullsize models, for better or worse. This is where the corporation's talents were focused. The 1964 XL looks great from the front or back. Ford also offered the Galaxie 500XL in a four-door hardtop. Note the 1964 Michigan dealer tag.



■ It didn't come out until April 1968, but the 428 Cobra Jet took over where the 427 left off. If your original 427 fell into unfortunate circumstances, or if your car was originally built with a too-tame engine, the 428 CJ was the hot ticket to super power. This one's outfitted with an aluminum 3x2 intake and a trio of Holley carbs. Heads have been ported and polished, and the exhaust has been upgraded at every point to take advantage of the high-flow intake.

## AT A GLANCE

### 1964 GALAXIE 500XL

**Owned by:** Jerry Ostalecki, Novi, MI

**Restored by:** Owner; paint by Jim Nicolson

**Engine:** 1969 428ci Cobra Jet

**Transmission:** C6 3-speed automatic

**Rearend:** 3.50 gears with Traction-Lok

**Interior:** Stock pleated vinyl bucket seats

**Wheels:** 15-inch Torq-Thrust D

**Tires:** P235/70R15 BFGoodrich Radial T/A

**Special parts:** 428 Cobra Jet engine swap, triple-carb induction, Tri-Y headers, Powerfront disc brakes, teardrop hood

the Ford Thunderbolt, to accommodate its sizeable cold air ducting. It looks right at home here, along with the always-handsome Torq-Thrust D wheels and P235/70R15 BFGoodrich blackwall radials.

The hardware list is impressive, but Jerry was after more than a showcase of parts.

"No expense was spared to make everything right and dependable," he says. It's fully streetable and doesn't overheat, leak

fluid, stall, or any of those bad habits often associated with very powerful street cars.

It has a way of connecting with muscle car enthusiasts who remember those days and appreciate its rare vintage flair. "It turns heads and gets thumbs-up," says Jerry.

You bet. Long live the primal prowlers: decked-out, maxi-motor, old-school, pe-period hot rods loaded for bear and ready to tangle with all comers! **MCR**





■ The Galaxie 500XL interior featured plenty of room and top-of-the-line appointments. Pedals look like Cal Custom items, but they're factory original. Jerry rebuilt the dash with N.O.S. gauges and trim; under-dash gauges are add-ons.

■ The Galaxie looks tough wearing a set of American Torq-Thrusts. BFG radials are a tip-off that Jerry likes to drive his bruiser.

■ The Sun Super Tach (and its underhood transmitter) are among the choice day-two mods Jerry has made to his Galaxie 500XL. The car harkens back to the days when no one left their ride stock.

■ Teardrop hood is an element borrowed from the 1964 Thunderbolt. It's no mere cosmetic accessory, but helpful in clearing the Cobra Jet's triple-carb induction.

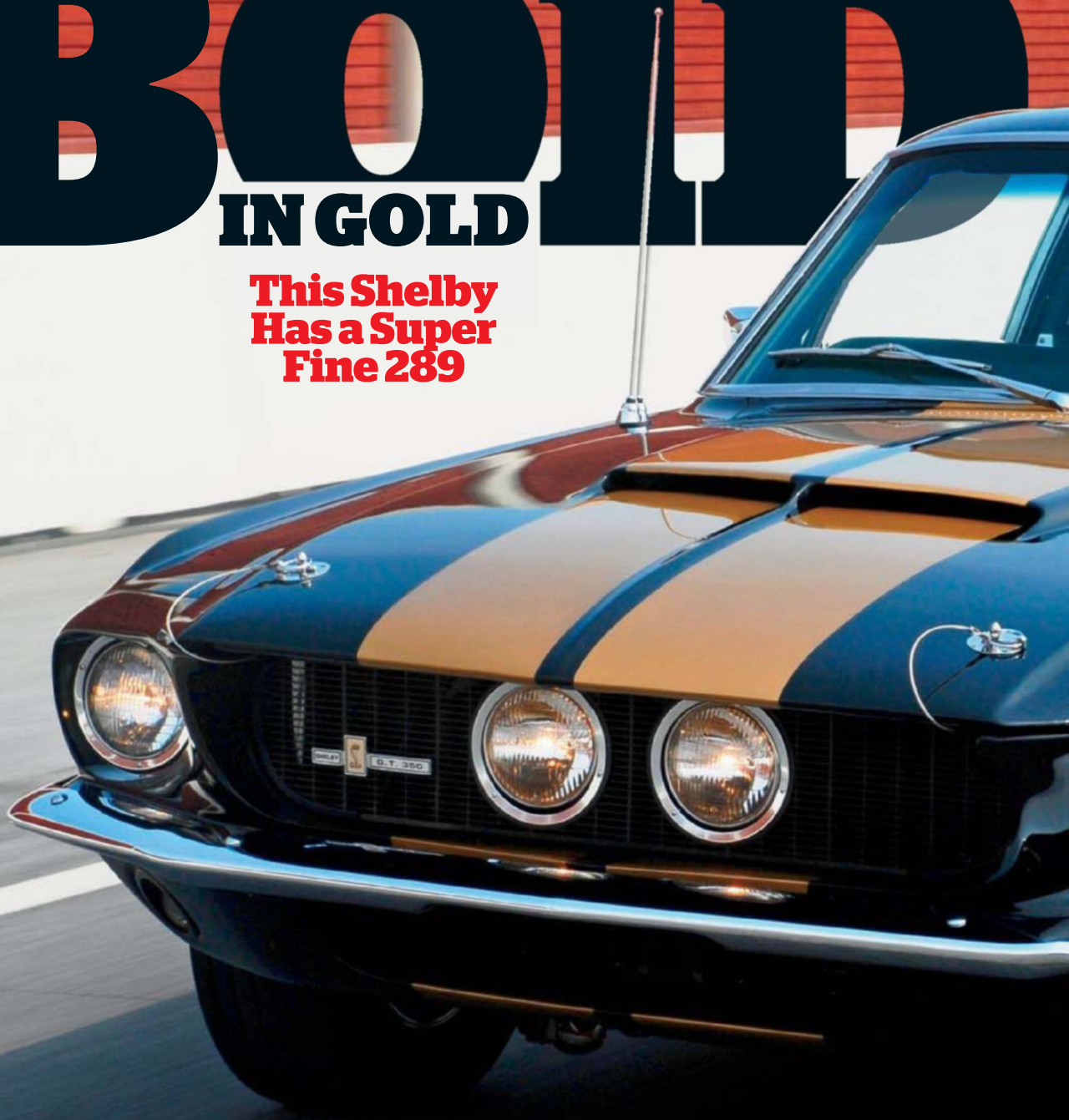
**“This car is 100 percent rust-free”**



# BOLD

## IN GOLD

**This Shelby  
Has a Super  
Fine 289**



**By Bob McClurg**

**R**emember the “Super Fine 289” engine buildup story that ran in our Sept. ’14 issue? That Paxton-supercharged Ford small-block, which produced nearly 316 rwhp and 388 lb-ft of torque on JBA Racing’s dyno, was built for this 1967 Shelby G.T. 350 owned by retired Honolulu nightclub owner Fred Piluso. Let’s take a closer look at the car the engine went into.

According to the Shelby American Automobile Club’s *Shelby Registry 1965-1966-1967*, this car, number 01378, was completed on April 14, 1967, and shipped to Welty Ford in Wenatchee, Washington. The car was originally purchased in late 1968 by hometown boy Gerald

Milliken. Over the years the car changed hands several times, staying in the Pacific Northwest until Fred bought it in September 2013.

Somewhere along the line, the original Hi Po 289 was reported to have been removed from the car and a lower compression, two-bolt main, two-barrel 289 was substituted in its place. As you would imagine, that didn’t set well with its new owner, so the following spring, Fred shipped the car to Craig Conley at Paradise Wheels in San Marcos, California, where it received the aforementioned (and correctly date coded) Paxton supercharged 289 Hi Po V-8. The crew at Paradise Wheels also rebuilt the Ford Top Loader four-speed transmission using a McLeod clutch and aluminum flywheel, along





**“The car had a nice, solid body, but the drivetrain was either incorrect or worn out”**



■ The gold stripes on this G.T. 350 make it look like one of the Hertz Shelys, but it's not. Owner Fred Piluso is a diehard Pittsburgh Steelers fan. All his cars wear the black-and-gold livery.



■ The 0.030-inch-over Hi Po 289, with the Paxton supercharger, Competition Cams valvetrain, and other go-fast hardware, produced 315.9 rwhp at 4,642 rpm and 388 lb-ft of torque at 3,915 rpm on J. Bittle's dyno.



■ Fred's "office" features all the amenities that the factory G.T. 350s have, along with a 1966 Shelby G.T. 350 dash-mounted tachometer, a fire extinguisher, and Simpson Safety belts, all three required items for SAAC open-track events.

## AT A GLANCE

### 1967 SHELBY G.T. 350

**Owned by:** Fred Piluso, Honolulu, HI

**Restored by:** Paradise Wheels, San Marcos, CA; The Paint Shop, Akron, OH

**Engine:** 289ci/315.9 (rear-wheel) hp supercharged V-8

**Transmission:** Top Loader 4-speed manual

**Rearend:** 3.50 gears with Traction Lok

**Interior:** Black vinyl bucket seat

**Wheels:** 15-inch Shelby Magnum

**Tires:** P255/60R15 BFGoodrich Radial T/A

**Special parts:** Paxton supercharger kit

with Hurst linkage bolted to the factory Ford T-handle.

"The car had a nice, solid body, but its drivetrain was either incorrect or worn out," said Craig. "For example, the rear-end had a bunch of brackets welded to it that evidentially were for traction bars of some type, most likely for drag racing. We plasma-cut those off, bead-blasted the housing, and detailed the rear-end back to its original condition. Then we installed a 3.50:1 Traction Lok carrier along with new axle bearings and seals. We also rebuilt the brakes and installed a new set of rear leaf springs and the correct Koni shocks."

Craig and employees Rob Kazen, Mark

Clyde, and Jesse Gonzales likewise rebuilt the entire front suspension with new ball joints, bushings, anti-sway bar endlinks, and more. They also rebuilt the front brakes, installed a pair of Konis, and rebuilt the power steering ram.

"Along the way we also installed a new fuel line, as the OE line was  $\frac{5}{16}$  inch in diameter and pinched," says Craig. "It was replaced with a larger,  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-diameter line so that the Paxton supercharger would get the necessary fuel it required."

When the dyno test was completed, the Shelby was shipped back to Fred's summer home in Concord, Ohio, where Paul Wolonsky from The Paint Shop in Akron, Ohio, re-



■ Retired nightclub owner Fred Piluso is rightly proud of his 1967 Shelby G.T. 350, and it shows. Our thanks to Osborne Farms in Mentor, Ohio, for the beautiful photo location.

**“Paxton’s  
Joe Granatelli  
contacted  
Carroll Shelby  
early in 1965”**



■ In our Sept. '14 issue we followed the build-up of this car's Paxton-fed 289 at Paradise Wheels. Here is the team that built the engine and finished the car (left to right): Mark Clyde, Rob Kazen, Paradise Wheels CEO Craig Conley, and Jesse Gonzales.



■ Fred opted to shoe this pony with a set of Paradise Wheels 15-inch Shelby Magnums rolling on BFGoodrich Radial T/A rubber. Check out the cool side-exit exhaust.

sprayed the white stripes gold. Of course, a black Shelby Mustang with gold stripes looks like one of the cars ordered for rental car fleets by Hertz back in the day, but the reality is that Fred is a hardcore Pittsburgh Steelers fan; all his cars, a collection that includes a 2006 Ford GT (which he keeps in Florida) and a 2007 Shelby GT500 convertible (which he keeps in Hawaii), are painted black and gold.

At this juncture, it should be noted that although the side stripes on the car say “G.T. 350 S,” Fred makes no bones about the fact that the car is *not* one of the 35 genuine 1967 Shelby G.T. 350 S cars listed in the latest SAAC *Shelby Registry*. ■



## THE GRANATELLI-SHELBY CONNECTION

The fourth edition of SAAC's *Shelby Registry* has a whole chapter devoted to the few 1966 and '67 Shelby Mustangs fitted with Paxton superchargers from the factory. According to SAAC's historians, Paxton had been watching the development of the Mustang and had a centrifugal supercharger kit ready for the 289 almost as soon as the car hit dealer showrooms. Paxton's Joe Granatelli contacted Carroll Shelby early in 1965 and pitched him on the idea of providing supercharger kits for the new G.T. 350. Shelby was skeptical of the idea but lent Granatelli a car to put the kit on.

When Granatelli returned to Shelby's facility near the Los Angeles International Airport with the kit installed, Shelby pitted the blown Mustang against one of his 289 Cobras. Granatelli and the Mustang spanked the Cobra, convincing Shelby that the blower was a good idea. Shelby promptly ordered 500 of the kits.

Nowhere near that many superchargers were installed during the two years Shelby offered the kit as a factory option. The *Registry* lists 11 1966 models and 35 1967s that were outfitted with the blowers. The kit was also available as an aftermarket add-on through Shelby's parts catalog, but it's not known exactly how many were sold and put on G.T. 350s.

A likely reason so few kits were sold was the \$549 price—a hefty add-on to a car already expensive at more than \$4,000. Plus, in 1967 buyers could step up to the big-block-powered G.T. 500 for \$4,395, just \$200 more than the \$4,195 G.T. 350.

The Granatelli/Shelby drag race notwithstanding, there's some controversy over just how much power the blower brought to the party. Paxton and Shelby advertised a 46 percent power increase, which would bring the output of the 306hp Hi Po 289 to nearly 450 hp. But that figure is based on calculations of the air pressure boost provided by the supercharger—6.3 psi, or about half an atmosphere—which in theory would increase the engine's output by a corresponding 46 percent. But as the SAAC historians point out, the supercharged Shelybs received no corresponding change in the engine's exhaust system, which would be necessary for the motor to realize the full benefit of all that incoming air. Recent dyno figures, they reported, showed that the engines gained 20-25 percent horsepower with the addition of the supercharger.

—Drew Hardin

■ Shelby G.T. 350 6S051 was the car Shelby used to prototype the installation of the Paxton supercharger kit. Wearing Ivy Green paint and white G.T. 350 S rocker stripes, it was also the first G.T. 350 painted a color other than white.



PHOTO COURTESY SAAC



**A**s car guys, we've been trained to believe that a car's value is based on rarity, horsepower, or originality. The auctions don't lie (in terms of retail value), but the cars rolling across the auction block are not often reflective of sentimental value. The sad fact is that while every old car has a story, there may not be someone who can tell it. The stories, the memories, and the emotions that old cars bring out of their owners is something a lot of people can't grasp. The car on these pages should bring it into perspective.

Charles Berry is the proud owner, and has been for 50 years. Even though Charles' life has changed a lot in those years, one thing remains constant: Ol' Blue, a 1963 Chevy Impala Super Sport convertible. Charles served in the Vietnam War, went to college, met a girl who would become his wife, raised three daughters, and continued a love affair with old cars without letting go of the car that meant the most to him. He's owned a Hemi 'Cuda, a Boss Mustang, a big-block Corvette . . . The list goes on, but those cars came and went. While some of them would be worth more money than the Impala, this story isn't about money.

**Value  
Is More  
Than Rare  
Options  
and Big  
Horse-  
power**

**By Tommy Lee Byrd**

# Ol' Blue





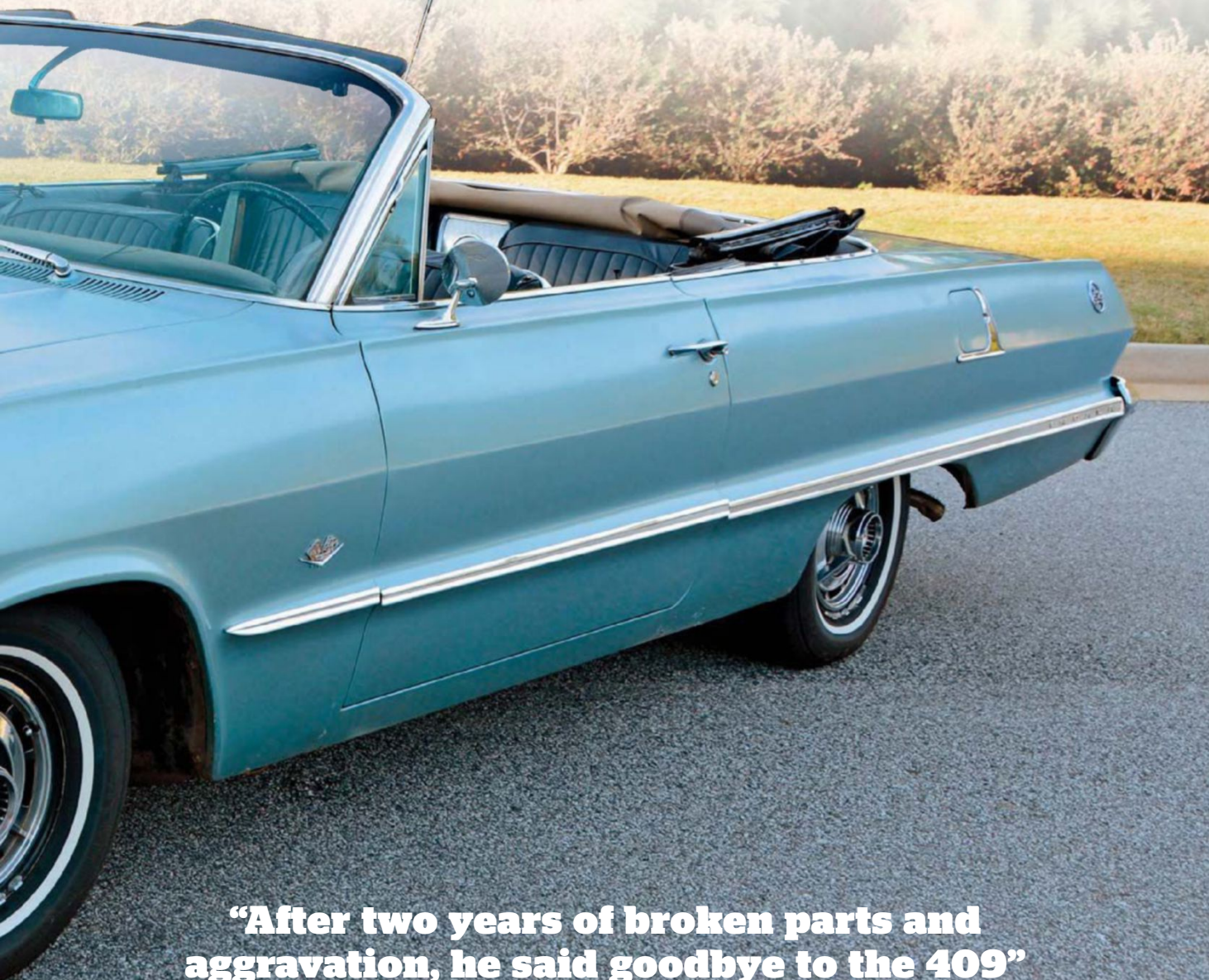
The story begins in 1965, at Southern Chevrolet in Decatur, Georgia. The car was wrecked and it wasn't running, but Charles didn't have a lot of money, so it worked to his advantage. With a price tag of \$825, the car was instantly a part of the family. A teenager at the time, Charles scraped up all the money he could to repair the car, and did so within the first year of owning it. During his time in the Navy, including being deployed in the Vietnam War, the car stayed at home and was driven by his father, Charles, as well as his sister, Beverly.

After Charles served his country and returned home, the Impala was still in the driveway. At this point the car still had the original 327ci small-block and Powerglide transmission, but Charles had a few more dollars in his pocket and wanted to spend them on the Impala. Before going into the Navy, Charles built a 1934 Plymouth hot rod, so he already had the bug for going fast, and for a short time the Impala played a role in his need for speed. From 1970 to around 1972, the car had a 409 under the hood backed by a Muncie four-speed transmission. He bought the engine and transmission from legendary 409 guru Lamar Walden,

whose shop wasn't too far away from Charles at the time. It was a stock 425-horse 409, with two four-barrel carburetors, but it was a big upgrade compared to the stock 327—at least on paper.

The nearest dragstrips were Atlanta Speed Shop Dragway and Yellow River Drag Strip (closed in March 1969), so those were pretty much the only tracks Charles visited. The car ran a best of 13.8 seconds at around 100 mph in the quarter-mile with the 409, but it required a lot of effort, and the abuse took a toll on the car. After two years of broken parts and aggravation, he said goodbye to the 409 but kept the four-speed.

After mating the stock 327 to the four-speed, he drove the car while he went to college at Georgia Tech. By 1973, Charles had traded his big-block Corvette for a brand-new Pontiac LeMans, and that became his daily driver. The next year he met a nurse by the name of Peggy and took her on a date in the Impala. They would go on a number of dates in the Impala, eventually driving away from their wedding in October 1974. Charles' father gave him a hard time because he left a new Pontiac sitting at home and chose to leave the wedding in an 11-year-old car. By this time



**“After two years of broken parts and aggravation, he said goodbye to the 409”**



■ The Impala sits a couple inches lower than stock because of its worn coil springs. Due to crash damage, the car underwent surgery to have a quarter-panel replaced, but the paint has held up well considering the paint job is nearly 40 years old and the car spent many years outside. The Super Sport trim is original equipment.



**“This story isn’t about money”**



■ Although it is showing its age, the interior in Ol' Blue is complete and functional, from the heater to the AM radio.



■ The car was originally equipped with a Powerglide transmission, as evidenced by the automatic shift plate on the console. Charles added the Muncie when he swapped the small-block for a 409 to go drag racing.

## AT A GLANCE

### 1963 IMPALA SS CONVERTIBLE

**Owned by:** Charles Berry, Lawrenceville, GA

**Engine:** 327ci/300hp V-8

**Transmission:** Muncie 4-speed manual

**Rear end:** Stock with 3.36 gears

**Interior:** Black vinyl bucket seats

**Wheels:** 14x6 steel

**Tires:** 215/75R14 Cooper

Peggy had given the car a nickname, Chug-a-Lug.

In 1976, the car received a fresh paint job and a fresh engine. Charles sent the tired 327 to John Reed, a well-known engine builder and the man behind Reed Cams in Decatur, Georgia. He bored the block 0.060 over and installed Jahn's 11:1

pistons. John installed a set of 283 Power Pak heads, adding larger valves before installing them. One of John's signature camshafts rides inside the block, while an Edelbrock C4B intake and Holley carburetor top off the sneaky small-block. With the new engine and paint job, the car was back in action, and even went back into daily



■ Charles has spent a lot of time behind the wheel of his Impala since he bought it in 1965. It has seen good days and bad days, but it survived them all—with a bunch of great stories to show for it.



■ The bias-ply tires have been changed out for radials, and the car received a repaint in the stock Silver Blue Metallic color in 1976, but otherwise the Impala's exterior is original.

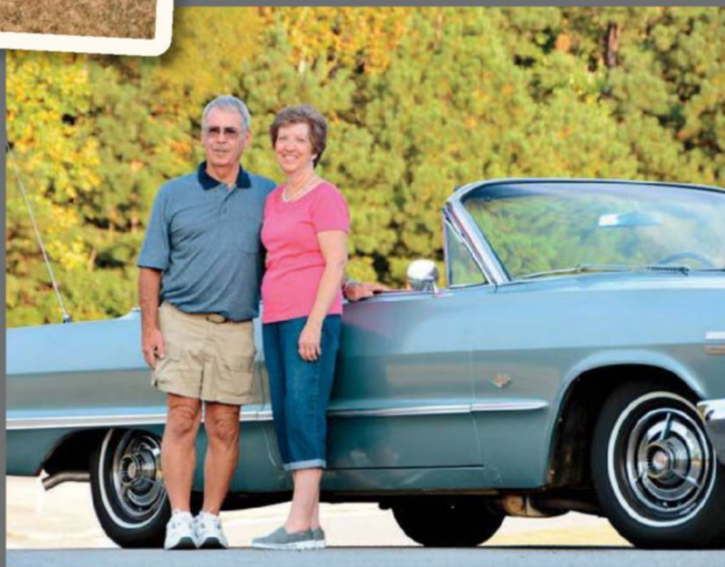


age-faded paint, tarnished trim, and a few bubbles from previous body repairs—but Charles doesn't have an immediate interest in restoring the car. Inside there is plenty of wear and tear, but a Hurst shifter poking out of the Powerglide console and a tach hanging below the dash instantly send Charles back to the 409 days. Back then a missed shift at full throttle would result in having to find a way to tow the car home and figure out what broke. While there aren't many hard shifts in Ol' Blue's current routine, you can bet Charles thinks about it every time he reaches forward to grab the Hurst handle.

Some might say that this Impala isn't as valuable as comparable cars that roll across the auction block. But there is no doubt that this car has a great history, and



■ Under the hood is the original 327ci small-block, but it has a few modifications from its most recent rebuild in 1976. John Reed handled the rebuild, adding a few speed parts along the way.



■ Charles and Peggy went on their first date in Ol' Blue (Peggy refers to the car as Chug-a-Lug), and they recently celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary. The car drove them away from the wedding and also drove them to the hospital for the birth of their three daughters, Jennifer, Kimberly, and Christina.

driver duty for a few years.

Fast-forward to 1978. The Impala was the vehicle of choice to drive Peggy to the hospital to deliver the first of three girls. This, too, became a tradition, as did driving the Impala on each girl's first day of school. The car was a fixture in the neighborhood Fourth of July parade, and it was always

a conversation piece that typically gave Charles a chance to share some of the car's history. It is memories like this that make Ol' Blue a part of the Berry family. Charles remarked, "Most people don't get it. A lot of people wonder why I've held onto it for all these years, but it's more than just a car."

These days, the exterior is showing its

it has an owner who will never let the almighty dollar erase all of those memories. Ol' Blue isn't just another '63 Impala; it's the car that helped shape a young man from Georgia into a war veteran, a husband, and a father, and it's a car that will be passed down through the generations so its story can live on for many years to come. **MC**



# NEW PRODUCTS



## ■ Camaro Hydraulic Clutch

McLeod Racing has developed new vehicle-specific hydraulic clutch kits, including a kit for 1967-1969 Camaros. Most kits include a McLeod hydraulic throwout bearing, a master cylinder with an adjustable rod end, the hydraulic lines, a pedal stop bracket, bracket to mount the master cylinder, and all the hardware needed. According to McLeod, Camaro owners will experience an easier pedal feel after installing the kit, making rowing through the gears even more fun. Information: McLeod Racing, [mcleodracing.com](http://mcleodracing.com).



## ■ Mopar Fan Clutch

Shown here mounted on a fan, the new fan clutch from Tony's Mopar Parts has been improved from the previous fan clutch Tony offered. These are concours-correct clutches with the proper face and red seal. These clutches were used on all Hemi and big-block cars from 1967 to 1970, and on 1970 340s without air conditioning. Information: Tony's Mopar Parts, 302/398-0821, [tonysparts.com](http://tonysparts.com).

## ■ In the Rearview

It's a small detail that can make a big difference when you're behind the wheel: Classic Industries has new rearview mirrors to fit 1970-1990 GM vehicles, including Camaros, Firebirds, Novas, and Impalas. Each mirror has a 10-inch surface and day/night function and is built with a chrome-plated housing and a gray rubber cushion edge. The mirrors come with a satin silver arm support and universal button-style mount; a mounting button and adhesive may be purchased separately if you are putting the mirror on a new windshield. Information: Classic Industries, 855/357-2787, [classicindustries.com](http://classicindustries.com).



## ■ Muffler Shield Kit

New from DEI Performance Products is this muffler shield kit that will help keep heat out of your muscle car's cabin. The shield is made from 10-mil dimpled aluminum with a 1/8-inch needle glass insulator, the same technology as DEI's Floor and Tunnel Shield II product. Each kit has a 42x24-inch Muffler Shield designed to wrap around any size muffler, plus heavy-duty 304 stainless locking ties. Information: DEI, 800/264-9472, [designengineering.com](http://designengineering.com).



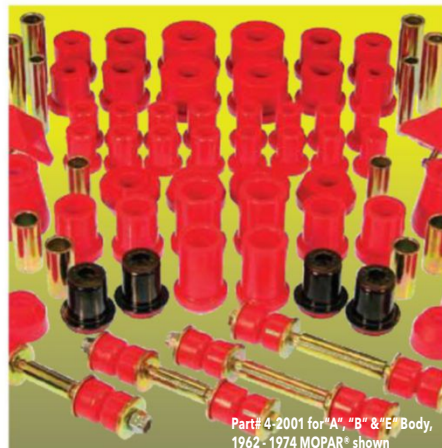
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## **TECH DAY**

Sunday, 9/13

### **Gateway Motorsports Park**

Madison, IL

- Gates open 9:00 am
- Tech until 5:00 pm
- Tune from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm
- Tickets: \$15 for 13 and above/Children 12 and under free

## **RACE DAY**

Monday, 9/14

### **Gateway Motorsports Park**

Madison, IL

- Gates open 7:30 am
- Racing until 1:30 pm or until complete
- Tickets: \$10 for 13 and above/Children 12 and under free

## **RACE DAY**

Tuesday, 9/15

### **Lucas Oil Raceway**

Indianapolis, IN

- Gates open 7:30 am
- Racing until 1:30 pm or until complete
- Tickets: \$10 for 13 and above/Children 12 and under free

## **RACE DAY**

Wednesday, 9/16

### **Great Lakes Dragway**

Union Grove, WI

- Gates open 7:30 am
- Racing until 1:30 pm or until complete
- Tickets: \$10 for 13 and above/Children 12 and under free

## **RACE DAY**

Thursday, 9/17

### **Cordova International Raceway**

Cordova, IL

- Gates open 7:30 am
- Racing until 1:30 pm or until complete
- Tickets: \$10 for 13 and above/Children 12 and under free

## **FINALS**

Friday, 9/18

### **Gateway Motorsports Park**

Madison, IL

- Gates open 11:00 am
- Racing from 2:30 pm to 8:30 pm or until complete
- Tickets: \$15 for 13 and above/Children 12 and under free

## **HEADS-UP!**

Saturday, 9/19

### **Gateway Motorsports Park**

Madison, IL

- Gates open 9:00 am
- Racing from 11:00 am to 3:30 pm or until complete
- Tickets: \$15 for 13 and above/Children 12 and under free

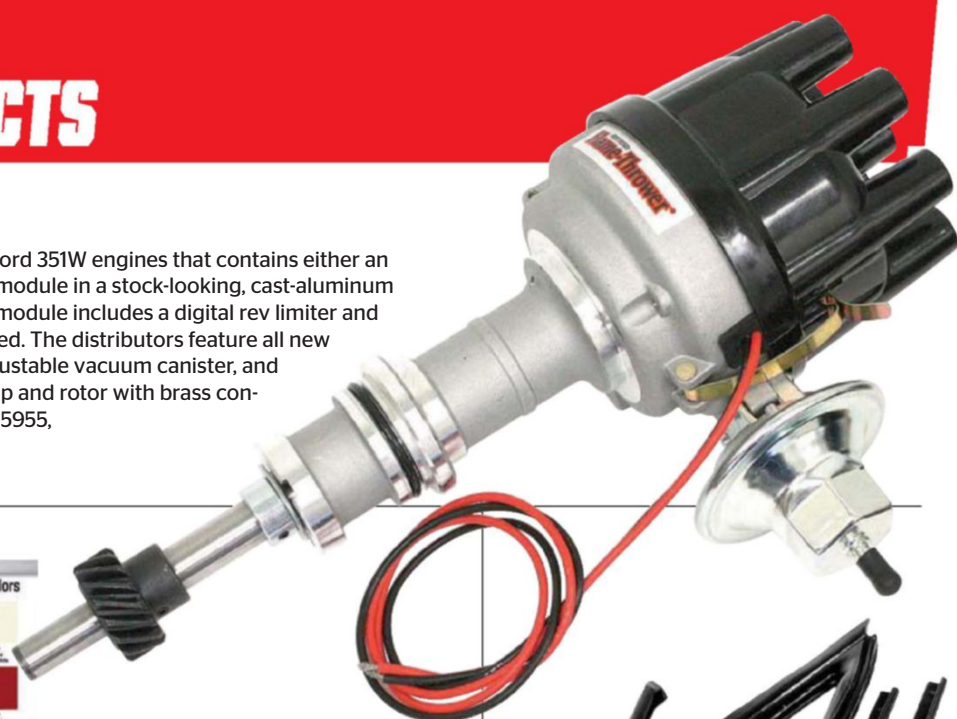
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# NEW PRODUCTS

## ■ Cast 351W Distributor

PerTronix now offers a distributor for Ford 351W engines that contains either an Ignitor or Ignitor III electronic ignition module in a stock-looking, cast-aluminum housing. Opt for the Ignitor III and the module includes a digital rev limiter and Multi Spark, so no external box is needed. The distributors feature all new parts, hardened steel gears, and an adjustable vacuum canister, and come with a high dielectric strength cap and rotor with brass contacts. Information: PerTronix, 909/599-5955, [pertronix.com](http://pertronix.com).



## ■ New Paint Colors

Eastwood has added nine new single-stage urethane automotive paint colors and 19 new basecoat colors to its extensive line of automotive refinish products. Plus, there's a new 4:1 premium show clearcoat and more than 35 pearls, flakes, and chameleon additives for those who want "special effects" in their car's paint. All of Eastwood's basecoats and single-stage urethane paints are 50-state compliant, as are its Direct to Metal epoxy primers. And while they are priced for the DIY user, "professional results are the end goal," says Eastwood. Information: Eastwood, [eastwood.com](http://eastwood.com).

## ■ Vent Window Seals

Metro Moulded Parts has introduced new vent window seals and rear division seals for 1968-1972 GM A-Body two-door sedans and El Caminos. These seals will cure that wind noise that's been bothering you for a while now, plus they'll look better than the dried-out and cracked seals in your windows. Right? Information: Metro Moulded Parts, [metrommp.com](http://metrommp.com).



## ■ Danchuk Car Care

You probably know Danchuk as a long-time supplier of restoration parts for 1955-1957 Chevs. Now the company is selling car care products under the Danchuk Vintage brand. The products in the line include spray wax, carnauba wax, wash-and-wax, premium dress (to protect plastic, vinyl, rubber, wood, and leather), all-purpose cleaner, leather conditioner, and metal polish. All products are made in the U.S. "using only premium quality ingredients," says Danchuk. Information: Danchuk, 800/260-0869, [danchuk.com](http://danchuk.com). **MCE**





## The Joy of Imperfections

■ Restoration perfection is awesome, but sometimes a few imperfections are just what you need.

**S**hould you find yourself in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, you'd better make time to take in the Floyd Garrett Muscle Car Museum. I've been around muscle cars for a long time, and I don't think there's a better group under one roof.

What's your fancy? 1950s power packs? Ultimate engine pony cars? Dealer supercars? Trans Am spinoffs, or maybe big, fullsize hardtops with optional high-performance engines? Floyd's got 'em all. To the muscle car enthusiast it's a candy store you won't soon forget. The collection rotates, too. It's always changing. Every year some cars leave, some stay, and some new cars arrive.

But one thing they all have in common is that they are all spectacular. Garrett is the curator of the collection. Some of the cars are his personal fleet, but many are there as a result of his personal invitation, extended because of their superior quality and rarity. A lot of the cars are no-expense-spared works of art, and you can't help but be overwhelmed and wonder what it would be like to own and drive such a car.

Well, what would it be like? Say that the planets aligned and somehow you won a flawless

1970 LS6 Chevelle. There it sits in your driveway. What are you going to do with it? Do you even have garage space? Can you open up a spot in the garage by moving a little junk, or will it require a huge weekend workout?

Once you've got a place for it, now what? Do you dare drive it? Should you even start the engine? Some engines are just about impossible to run without burning the paint on the exhaust ports. So your high-end detailing is already going downhill. Maybe you're OK with a little port discoloration, but as you continue to operate the engine you'll probably begin to notice some gasket seep, oily film from blow-by that loves to attract dust, and maybe a few stains on the intake from leaking gas. Then there's the expensive and rare N.O.S. air filter that's getting dirty. See what I mean? And that's just from running the engine.

If you drive it you're dealing with a whole other catalog of wear: stone chips in the paint, bug guts on your rare and expensive N.O.S. grille, exhaust discoloration on your rare and expensive N.O.S. exhaust tips and bumper, scuffs on your N.O.S. carpet. And if it rains or you drive through a puddle, whoa Nellie! There goes your undercarriage detailing. That

perfect SS454 Chevelle that won Best of Show a year or two ago now wouldn't even place. You've transformed a show champion into a lowly driver.

Does that go down easy or do you choke on it? Lie down on Dr. Shaw's couch and let's explore your deep-seated guilt. You loved your mother, you hated your father, tell me about your dreams.

If your dream was to drive your favorite muscle car and have the time of your life, maybe there's a better way to go about it.

What if, instead of a glamorous trophy wife with her diva demeanor, perfectionist personality, and budget-busting N.O.S. habit, you set your sights on something a little less lofty and a lot more practical? Maybe the museum is just the right place for restoration perfection, but an enthusiast's garage really isn't. If you ask me, it's better to enjoy a lesser level of perfection, one with a few well-earned bumps and bruises, flaws and blemes, scrapes and scratches.

I've never been much of a suit-and-tie guy. I'm myself in jeans, a street shirt, and cheap sneakers. I'd rather photograph car parts in a garage than go to meetings with execs in a conference room. Same with my cars. I admire the very high-end restorations, but when it comes to ownership I'm

more casual than concours. I can relax and enjoy my much-less-than-perfect drivers knowing that I can drive it to dinner or set a tool on the fender without doing meaningful damage.

I once had a date with a beautiful girl whose photograph was on a nationally distributed greeting card. I felt flattered, but afterwards I realized that the date was really more stressful than fun. Much later I had a dream that another, more ordinary girl and I were running through a field, totally unguarded, in happy harmony, laughing, joyous, and having one of life's unforgettable moments.

Translate that thought into car terms and you see what I'm getting at: to take on the pressure of preserving perfection, or relax and enjoy a car with imperfections that cancel the guilt of driving it and making wonderful memories? I'm not hating on concours cars. Not at all. I dig 'em, and I'm very glad there are guys like Garrett who can give them the home they need. But as far as what I own, I know where I fit. I'm good with it, and I won't waste time pretending otherwise.

I'm in my element with a smaller house, casual clothes, simple food, and in my cars, the joy of imperfections. **MCR**

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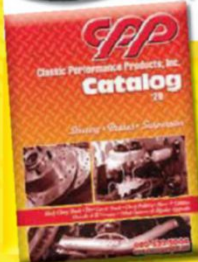
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